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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME V | NEW YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1928 | NUMBER 3

All Honorable Men?

THOSE who for the past few years have been following the flow of contemporary literature have been increasingly aware that the interest of the public has been steadily veering in the direction of biography. And those who are jealous of the possibilities of biography, have been uneasily watching its most recent developments. For biography, under the impulsion of the new interest, has been making all haste to accommodate itself to the chronic propensity of the multitude for the dramatic and the scandalous. Indeed the unsavory already rides it like an incubus. From pulling down idols from their pedestals, it has taken to setting up criminals for inspection. To be the subject of a memoir to-day it is no longer necessary to have played a part in history, to have been great or worthy or typical of a period, but it suffices merely to have wrought havoc with manners or morals. Those wild or gallant ladies of an earlier day who with their male associates in crime or debauchery collectively have a place in the history of civilization, scarcely deserve the dignity of individual biographies. Yet they are being chronicled with a fulness of detail that leaves nothing of sin to the imagination, and an undiscriminating public and critics whose cult is open-mindedness proclaim the growing trend toward the revamping of such personalities as evidence of historical curiosity.

Simultaneously with the degradation of biography to the level of the merely scandalous memoir has come a romanticization of biographical annals that brings them perilously near to fiction. For some years now the psycho-analysts have been busy reading character in the terms of complexes and reinterpreting action in accordance with Freudian theory. And now, from the biography that has rested on the ascription by the author to his subjects of motives and impulses we are advancing to a sort of bastard biography that is a blend of fact, comment, and criticism dressed up in a garb of conversation that makes it in form fiction if in intention chronicle. What with one thing and another biography is showing a tendency toward the vivacious rather than the veracious, and toward the picturesque rather than the pictorial.

It is the more to be deprecated that contemporary biographical writing which is constantly achieving new excellence in its soberer phases should thus be squandering ability on worthless subjects or on pseudo-history since there has perhaps never been a time more open to interest in the annals of personality than is the present. In a society which is intensely mechanistic, where the inventions of science have brought within the ken of the many the world of the distant and the little-known, men must exercise their imaginations in the past, in the future, or in that realm of human nature which always the same is yet never the same. Biography has become, in the language of the day, a literature of escape. If the jungles of Africa have yielded to the camera of a Johnson the jungles of the soul are still infinite for the exploring. There is more of zest to be derived from the study of character than from description of the Taj Mahal which the screen has made as recognizable as the Woolworth tower; more of the tang of the unfamiliar in the reaction of personality to incident than in many an adventure which the cable chronicles. Human nature in prosperity and adversity, under temptation and in strength, sinned against or sinning, is at once the best known and the least known of phenomena to men. Not only the proper but the most fascinating study of mankind is man. Why, therefore, debase it? Why confuse the value of biography by spending its pains upon the entirely unimportant or worthlessly striking? Why deprive it of value by making it merely sensational? The villain and the desperado have their place in history quite as much as the hero and the saint. They deserve their chronicles quite as much as their betters if by their living they have influenced their day. But the merely trivial or sinful deserve the obloquy of oblivion after death as in life they merited outspoken condemnation.

Prophet

By KATHLEEN MILLAY

WHAT should I tell you more?
Have I not said
That green things grow again another year,
And trees are tall with pruning?
Have I not told
That for a little while
Our tears will matter much,
And then grow old
And we will be too weary of old weeping?
Let me alone,
For I have said enough;
For I have said
That birth is born of death,
And there is no such thing
As life and living—
Only a waiting
And a while between,
And then a memory
Of sights unseen
And sounds unheard
And truths that have never been there.
Let me alone
For I have said too much.

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"Rum, Romance, and Rebellion."
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"Selected Poems of Sir William Watson."
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Folk Literature

By MARY AUSTIN

IT would be interesting to trace the divagations of a word that was originally meant to include all of us, and has come at last to refer only to those minority groups whose social expression is the measure of their rootage in a given environment. For by folk in this connection we mean precisely people whose culture is wholly derived from their reactions to the scene that encloses them, taking nothing from extra-tribal sources except as these forcibly constitute themselves factors of that scene. It was not in the original intention of the Founders that there should be any such in the Republic. The early American ideal of the homogeneous group, completely penetrated by the Press and polarized by the Public Schools, under an equality of opportunity which provided for every individual his due ray from every part of the concave heaven, took no account of the automatic limitation of receptivity by the completely accepted background. Yet it is in the capacity for such acceptances, as final in its fixation of social allegiance as the acceptance of the predestined mate, that the quality of Folk-ness is universally established.

And at the same time that the doctrine which was to free the major American group from the condition of folkness was being set forth in phrases that still have a ringing sound, provisions were being made for the systematic exclusion of two minor factions from this hypothetical spherosity guaranteed by the Constitution. Thus from the very initiation of the Democratic experiment, the predetermined limitation of the social and economic environment of Indians and Negroes was creating the circumstance once disclaimed by good Americans who, when inquiry was afoot for the folk-product, cherished by European peoples as the peculiar sign of their social integration, blandly explained that "we have no folk literature because we have no folk." We fancied ourselves then—and still, in many quarters—so completely exposed to all the cultural influence of the world at large as to be completely exempt from the disposition to local rootage. And we believed, perhaps as the inevitable corollary of our general repudiation of intimacy between man and the scene that supports him, that literature was only produced in the neighborhood of Universities, or at least of Lyceums and Chautauquas and other popular substitutes for the same.

* * *

Let me not be understood as slighting the sincerity, the industry, the gallantry, with which the major population of these United States gave themselves to achieving that condition of universal receptivity which alone would justify the democratic adventure. Nor was there lacking the missionary effort to induct the Indian and the Negro, without altering their environmental isolation, into the footless culture of first century of the Republic. Fortunately both Indian and Negro proved immune to cultural intimations unrelated to the actuality of their social environment. It is quite possible because folk-ness stood in the American mind for invidious social distinctions such as the Republic was constituted to deny, that our efforts have been so much more concerned with obliterating its evidence than with removing the conditions from which it took its rise.

At any rate, folk activity did go on in song and story and latterly in the plastic arts, untouched by our sedulously cultivated inter-tribal sophistication. It went on among the negroes chiefly as lyrics—the

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only contribution of its kind in America which receives and deserves the classification of "spiritual"; it went on among the Indians as the still living fragment of an inestimable, wasted treasure of myth and music, dance, drama, and decorative design. All along the border of economic security, wherever pioneer conditions made of the natural environment a profoundly personal influence, folk literature arose with the lusty speed of American enterprise; among Creoles of the south, cowboys of the west, lumberjacks of the north. Early in the history of the Republic a considerable group of our best middle-class English stock were pushed, in part by the circumscription of their economic environment through slavery, back into the southern mountains where, in the course of three or four generations, out of that readjustment arose one of the most interesting folk literatures of the world. Its interest rests chiefly in the reversion of a language which at the beginning of this isolation had reached a degree of literary sophistication not surpassed in Europe. Here, cut off from contributory French and German influence, poor-white English reverts to an incisive, delicately florated Gothic dialect—Gothic, I mean, in its structural decoration—which, as revealed by Percy MacKaye, has all the "wildness of beauty and strangeness" of a fifteenth century Gothic carved wood interior which has miraculously rooted and grown into the leafage and jointure of a Kentucky and Tennessee woodland. In form the folk literature of the piney woods can be traced to English balladry and anecdote of the Hanoverian dynasties. Where it breaks into dialogue there are touches of splayed Elizabethan rugosity, but its imagery and descriptive phraseology exhibit an immortal freshness, such as seems to have characterized that other great Nordic transmutation in the Hellenic peninsula.

* * *

While this fortunately neglected offshoot of the King's English was budding, in the Spanish colonies, by similar process of isolation and adaptation, there stemmed, out of the great age of Lopa de Vega and Cervantes and all that Golden Century of Spain, a local culture, which by the time it was ded, more by inadvertence than by actual con-, within our territory had definitely taken on k character. Originally wholly Spanish in their e of expression, the settlements along the Rio Grande actually received more from the deeply rooted Indian tribes of that region than any other of our European colonies. This was, of course, partly because the Indians of our Southwest had themselves arrived at a higher status of cultural sophistication. In taking over the food crop, the architecture and general economic complex of the Indians, the Spanish colonist gave to their folk-product an objective superiority which it still retains, so that the folk art of New Mexico, where it is still found at its best, is chiefly pictorial and plastic. What is left of its lyrical disposition, as was to be expected, is chiefly lyrical and dramatic. During the three months of horseback trekking which ensued on the landing of the Spanish Pioneers at Vera Cruz, before they could sit down at their capital of Santa Fé, they amused themselves with comedies composed on the spot, and celebrated the founding with a drama, performed wholly on horseback, the manuscript of which has been recently recovered by the writer from the descendants of the original performers. Under the unfavorable auspices of the American occupation, both drama and poetry languished as mediums of folk expression, except in connection with the Church.

Drama is scarcely written freshly in Spanish New Mexico any more, but one still finds *corridos*, poetical narrative and comment on current events, springing spontaneously from people who are not always able to commit them to writing unaided. The folk song flourishes here, under the primitive copyright which makes it an offense to perform any man's song without his consent, and *coplas* as an accompaniment to ballad dancing are still made.

So much is being said of Negro folk-literature, and of Indian, though not always dependably, that it is unnecessary to recapitulate. Indian myth and song have had almost more than due attention, and have suffered much from the prevailing disposition to revamp them according to European models. This practice is especially to be regretted since it robs us of the essential service of Indian literature, which is to delimit from the racial elements the pure influence of the American scene as a constituent of literary form. Yet garbled as it has been, the resemblances of Amerind to American pattern reactions is sufficiently evident. It is more than probable that in the summing up of America's contribution to literary scholarship, the confirmation in these two folk achievements of the profound influence of landscape line on literary composition will be the first, as the folk-reversion of English in the Kentucky mountains will probably prove to be the second, in importance.

* * *

Almost it begins to look as though that furious obsession of alikeness which has expressed itself in our culture through the medium of the Lyceum, the Chautauqua, and the Outline-Story, has defeated itself by the haze of its own speed to achieve what now is found to be fruiting from secret and neglected roots—literature which shall reveal in its form and flavor the true tang of the American soil. For on closer examination such roots are discovered threading their way to the core of American life from almost any aspect of it which, for any reason, is sufficiently ignored by the religiously undertaken programs of what is called culture. Wherever we have a group reaction to any aspect of our common life, expressed on no other experimental basis than the necessity of mechanical adjustment to it, we have a folk attitude, invoking a folk-expression. If most of the notions of Capitalists and Capitalism drawn and written in the *New Masses* are not folk lore, then our definition of folk lore needs revising. Here one meets again the swollen figure of the Ogre and the Giants that Jack killed, delimited by the same processes that gave birth to those ancient figures, and the labor hero nobly appareled as Jack Dullard who married the King's daughter. Nor can one avoid seeing in much that comes to us from our expatriate intellectuals, the warping away from the wall of a social condition impossible to be fruitfully penetrated, a characteristic folk attitude.

* * *

Along the line of adjustments performed by our immigrant population in contact with the unfamiliar, but inevitably-to-be-mastered, environment of American cities now and then crops out such a piece of folk-drama as "Abie's Irish Rose," a Manhattan Island folk play as authentic as a comedy by Plautinus. That the critics should have condemned it for being so absolutely in the folk mode that it omitted no single one of the *clichés* of limitation due from the environment against which it was displayed, was to have been expected. But in another hundred years when practically everything has been lost out of the common speech that was summed in its dialogue, these will annoy no more than the repetitious phrases, the hand-worn imagery, of the British ballads. And who will care then from what dead levels of the commonplace Miss Nichols plumped her scenes, except the scholars whose delight it will be to run her characters home to their alloted comic strips—the modern *graphiti* of the Manhattanite—marvelling at the freshness with which the life of the unnumbered masses is thus revealed to them.

* * *

And this brings us to the problem which has never been satisfactorily solved for the erudite, as to whether folk literature has been in every case produced by folk. Did the British Ballads aforesaid originate in the pot-house and the servants' hall, or in the Great Hall of the Manor, from which they eventually reached, by a normal process of abandonment, the levels of appreciation which have preserved them? One suspects the latter. Did not the ancient skalds and harpers sing and harp before Kings and heroes as well as to the underlings to whom listening was graciously permitted? Miss Nichols, though native to the social background of her play, is not exactly of it. Percy MacKaye is not even related to the Kentucky mountains, and yet it is from his hands we have received the most convincing transmission of its peculiar literary *genre*. Joel Chandler Harris was not born to the cabin in which his youth was matriculated, to the lore out of which his immortal Bre'r Rabbit and Bre'r Fox arose. Longfellow was no Indian, not even an authentic student of that people, but his Hiawatha has come so close to authentic expression that Indians themselves are disposed to accept him. Much of American folk lore, at any rate, is not given its final shaping by the folk that produced it. And in the case of the Uncle Remus tales, where a complete synthesis of Negro, Amerind, and American elements has been achieved—for not even the most expert folk-lorists are able to divide the red from the black elements in the Bre'r Rabbit cycle—there is no piece of European folk literature of whose origins we are able to speak confidently, to compare with it. And on the other hand, though Milt Gross is more the initiate of Eastside New York than Ann Nichols ever imagined herself, "Nize Baby" is not a folk product. Literature, yes; but not folk literature. Nor are the tales of Sherwood Anderson, profound and sincere as is his effort to shuck himself to the buff of the naive, fumbling midwestern soul. Neither are all the poems of James Weldon Johnson and Countee Cullen negro poetry. The distinction seems to lie not so much in the identification of the writer with the folk, as in his sharing for the time being the folk limitation, or in not sharing it.

This shared limitation is what constitutes the folkness of certain sophisticates, the constitutional, or acquired, incapacity to function creatively outside of a given environment, as Mr. Gross so unobtrusively does in presenting not only the soul of a Yiddish tenement, but its material envelope against an omniscient New York. Compared with this ambidextrous achievement of the author of "Nize Baby," Mr. Anderson's work appears turgid and Lew Sarrett's Indians merely well done. Wherever in any folk presentation, consciousness of the audience creeps in, the capacity to function with and through that audience is inferred, and by so much mitigates against the folk quality of the production.

* * *

Although no such policy has declared itself in the American mind, there is unmistakably a movement toward the localization of cultures, and a general relaxation in respect to regional influences. It comes rather as an escape from the tyranny of dulness than as an expressed intention. Any culture completely generalized over so vast an area and so mixed a population as that of the United States, would inevitably reduce itself to terms much lower than its highest possible mark. That ours should have become also injuriously repressive is perhaps owed to the sanctity which, among us, attaches to majority rule. If the censorship of unspecialized opinion, which has progressively accompanied our national aculturation, results in the voluntary restraint of creative impulses by surrender to the strongly localized environment, such censorship cannot be regarded as altogether evil. For the first condition of power is restraint. And the first fruits of creative restraint are penetration and plastic control over the material in which that power is to be expressed. From first to last American literature has lacked that easy mastery over its material which characterizes the literature of older, smaller, more intimately lived in countries . . . . Greece, England, France. With the modern ease of transportation and the political demands for the utmost stretch of political attention, it is fortunately impossible for the literary environment of any region to arrive at folk fixation. There is, however, no doubt that the footless level of literary appreciation will be raised or lowered according to the levels attained by mastery over the regional *mise en scène*. The escape, at any rate, from the tyranny of a too diffuse culture is not by avoidance, but by reversions to the earth, the secret escape of the root in the ground that consents to the dried husk and the withered leaf while it gathers strength in the dark for a richer blooming.

* * *

It is possible that the paucity of literature of more than local significance at the present moment, and the preoccupation of many writers, themselves creatively endowed, with the folk product, indicates just such a cæsura in our creative output. Is it not the task of the creative worker herein to discover how to become folk, in the completest sense, of that larger environment which is for Americans the matrix of so many local intimacies and masteries? Do we not most of us instinctively flinch from the very magnitude of the American scene, immensely complicated by its own incoherence? Do we not have moments of positive yearning for the smug integration of France, the regularly stratified and competently labeled background of England? How shall we learn to accept, with the unresentful acceptance of a root in the ground, the impenetrable rock bottom, avoid, without contempt, the sterile strip, bourgeon unboastfully in the rich humus of a kindred soil? Some such *rapport* with the background of literary undertaking is the secret of folk literature, now, happily, to be learned here at home, in mediums which however unfamiliar are at least

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generic to the American enterprise. Are not the novels of Willa Cather, with their imperfectly bridged intervals between episodes, and her seemingly naive rejection of the superior consciousness of the bystanding Intellectuals as a medium of integration, exactly what is to be expected of the folk attitude toward American society? In the same manner do the characters of Mr. O'Neill's plays fail to take any account of any other penetrations of their problems than their own. And are not these the normal reactions of sincere artistry against the duty which the older English novelists and playwrights, Galsworthy, Wells, Bennett, and Shaw, exhibit, of being aware at all times of the complete implication of all England in whatever their characters happen to be doing?

What appears to be happening, along with our belated recognition of our regional folk literature, is the delocalization of other literatures which are nevertheless of the folk, isolated by the range of their social perception rather than by environmental rootage. The really pertinent question to be asked here is whether, in a Democracy like ours, any other sort of literature is to be expected. For what we seem chiefly to have learned about Democracy is that however much it may equalize opportunity, it has little or no effect on the range of individual receptivity.

Rum and the "Fathers"

RUM, ROMANCE AND REBELLION. By CHARLES WILLIAM TAUSSIG. Drawings by PHILIP KAPPEL. New York: Minton, Balch & Co. 1928. $4.

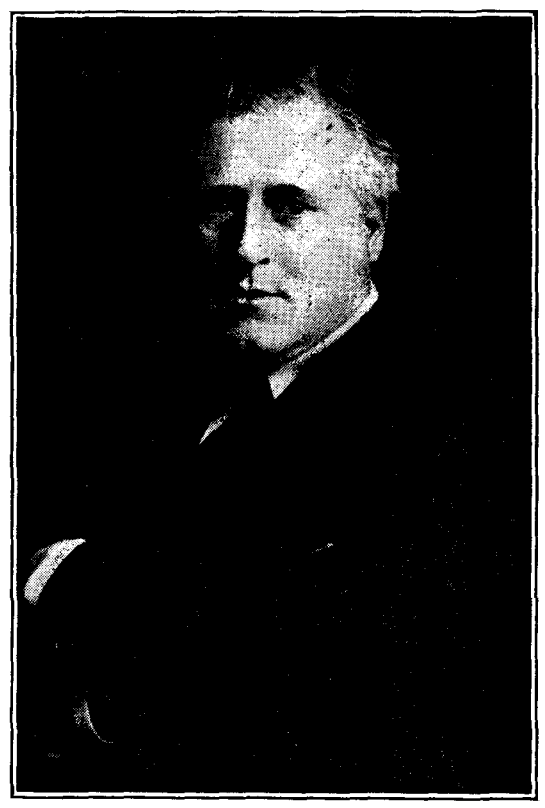
Reviewed by WILLIAM MACDONALD

THERE is very little rebellion in Mr. Taussig's book, unless by rebellion is meant a widespread and long-continued violation of certain laws of which no considerable number of persons at the time approved. His lively account of the drinks that made the nation is an entertaining recital of facts which the present generation of Americans, bidden by the Supreme Court to regard national prohibition as constitutional, and hence of unquestioned morality, ought presumably to deplore and try to forget. Naturally, there will be many to regret that such a book should ever have seen the light, but its facts, unfortunately for the legalist or the moralist, are too much a part of our history to be disposed of by any kind of intellectual hocus-pocus, and until the book is suppressed and its circulation correspondingly increased, there seems to be nothing to do but to face the music, and admit that rum and other alcoholic compounds have played exactly the part in our patriotic evolution that history shows them to have played.

And what are the facts? Woodrow Wilson pointed to some of them when he wrote that "out of the cheap molasses of the French Islands" New England "made the rum which was a chief source of her wealth." A New England historian, William B. Weeden, had already said much the same thing when he declared, in the course of the most thorough study of the early economic life of New England that has yet been made, that in the New England trade "Negroes, fish, vessels, lumber, intercolonial traffic in produce, all feel the initiative and moving impulse of rum." The nineteenth century was well advanced before the righteous inhabitants of the Puritan zone, and their equally upright neighbors to the south, felt it proper to launch a ship, or raise a barn, or dedicate a meeting-house or church, or celebrate a marriage or a funeral without plentiful outpourings and intakings of rum or other liquors, while contemporary descriptions of their dinners and banquets show a rich array of bottles and decanters studding and flanking the portentous list of viands. New England merchants and shipowners, with their commercial brethren in other colonies or States, freighted their ships with rum to buy Negroes in Africa, and sold what survived of their human cargoes for molasses from which to make more rum to buy more slaves. The basis of more than one American fortune of today was laid in a trade of which rum and slaves formed the principal elements.

Only now and then did any one object. John Adams appears to have felt some qualms about the growing number of public-houses with their attendant vices, and Franklin saw the practical wisdom of withholding rum from the Indians until some pending treaty was actually signed, but the dispensing places multiplied, the multiplication of drinks assured the traveller of a varied good cheer, and huskings, quilting bees, and sleighing parties had their meed of alcoholic accompaniment. Washington agreed that a gardner whom he hired should have "four dollars at Christmas with which he may be drunk for four days and nights; two dollars at Easter to effect the same purpose; two dollars at Whitsuntide to be drunk for two days; a dram in the morning, and a drink of grog at dinner at noon." Throughout the inter-colonial wars, as in the War of Independence, rum was an indispensable part of a soldier's ration, and it did not cease to be a popular drink until the decline of the West India trade allowed whisky to make its way as a substitute. Moreover, with the rum, the drink of the people, went a great consumption of wines and spirits by those who could afford such quasi-luxuries. Had the stream of alcohol that flowed along the Atlantic seaboard in the days of our national beginnings been fired at any point, there would speedily have been an almost unbroken line of illumination from Maine to Georgia, and the connecting whisky streams would have carried the flame to the Great Lakes and the mouth of the Ohio.

Such is the slough from which, at the cost of some millions of dollars every year, we are in process



WILLIAM WATSON

of being dragged, to be laid out eventually on the sand high and dry. "There is in the sweet aromatic redolence of old rum," Mr Taussig remarks, "a mystic charm, a soft soothing fragrance that beguiles one into forgetting its more sinister and vicious history." But with fragrance at a dollar a sniff, even the memory of a mellow age has become too costly. If Mr. Taussig has any axe to grind, neither head nor handle protrudes in his pages; he tells the story with only an occasional suggestion of relish, and lets it go at that. There is nothing particularly new in what he writes, and the critic must be partisan indeed who can discover in his book the temper of the muckraker. He has been content to draw back the curtain and show us the "fathers" as they really were. No one with the fear of the Lake School of Chicago reformers before his eyes will dare to hint that the fathers, trading their rum-bought slaves at a good profit and plotting independence to the accompaniment of toddy and old Madeira, could possibly have been guilty of any wrong.

The Birthday Honors of King George recently bestowed included a knighthood for William A. Craigie, editor of the "Oxford English Dictionary." "But the event of the most general interest in the list," says the *Manchester Guardian*, "is the addition of another name to the Order of Merit. The number of civil members of that Order, reduced to eleven by Hardy's death, becomes twelve again by the inclusion of an eminent philologist, Sir George Grierson. Few men can have completed with so little public notice so great a task as he did when he lately brought to a close at the age of seventy-seven his "Linguistic Survey of India." The work has taken twenty-five years to compile. It fills twenty stout volumes, and it demanded acquaintance with 179 languages and 534 dialects."

Watson at Seventy

SELECTED POEMS OF SIR WILLIAM WATSON. Selected with notes by the author. London: Thornton Butterworth, Ltd., 15 Bedford St. 1928.

Reviewed by ROBERT UNDERWOOD JOHNSON

ON the 2nd of August Sir William Watson, regarded by many as the most artistic, if not the greatest, English-writing poet of the day, completed his seventieth year, and it is this event doubtless which has given occasion to this definitive edition of his poetry. Mr. Asquith,—I think it was at the death of Tennyson,—not then in a position to nominate the laureate, recommended Watson for that exalted position, and the appropriateness of his choice has been widely felt by men of letters both in and out of Great Britain, and the commonplace output of the two successors of Tennyson has confirmed the impression that the laureateship itself has suffered eclipse of dignity by the ignoring of a poet of Watson's performance and traditions. The present volume, covering, as it does, the full range of his verse, places him in the front rank of those who in years to come will be looked back to as interpreters of our time in noble numbers. American poets, familiar with his work, are wishing him a long life of unbroken and undimmed service to the art which has been his chief concern; and the American public, sated with eccentricities that pass for poetry, may well do penance to the Muse by according to this volume of beautiful and stimulating verse the welcome that it deserves.

If one were to choose out of the 210 items in this book the lines which represent the author's finest poetic qualities—so to speak, his norm—they might well be these:

> Well he slumbers, greatly slain,
> Who in splendid battle dies;
> Deep his sleep in midmost main
> Pillowed upon pearl who lies.
>
> Ease, of all good gifts the best,
> War and wave at last decree;
> Love alone denies us rest,
> Crueller than sword or sea.

It would be hard to find anything to surpass th stanzas in compactness of imaginative substance a in perfection of musical technic. The alliteration of vowels and consonants leaves nothing to be desired, and yet it is not achieved at the expense of the thought which it enhances. The poem stirs the mind by its cumulative effect and by the surprise of its conclusion, which is like the last line of the best sonnets. One may seek far in Victorian or cis-Victorian verse to find so much in so small a compass. It is to be commended to professors of the art in the classroom and to practitioners in the study in the garret.

This collection deepens the conviction that artistically Watson stands at the head of contemporary English poets. He has made little foray into the field of ballad writing such as that of Kipling and Noyes and Masefield, who have cleverly resounded popular chords; but he is much more than a superb artificer. His outlook on life, being high, is broad, and he brings to it the perception of an intellectual vision. No one has ever accused him of jingling; but nearly everything he has written is informed with rhythm. There is a lilt in his most static verse. Among his numerous pure lyrics is one, free and simple, called "I Care Not," with the refrain

> If thou, my love, if thou, my love,
> If thou forget not me.

One of the finest lyrics is

THE PROTEST

> Bid me no more to other eyes
> With wandering worship fare,
> And weave my numbers garland-wise
> To crown another's hair.
> On me no more a mandate lay
> Thou wouldst not have me to obey!
>
> Bid me no more to leave unkissed
> That rose-wreathed porch of pearl.
> Shall I, where'er the winds may list,
> Give them my life to whirl?
> Perchance too late thou wilt be fain
> Thy exile to recall—in vain.
>
> Bid me no more from thee depart,
> For in thy voice today
> I hear the tremor of thy heart
> Entreating me to stay;
> I hear . . . nay, silence tells it best,
> O yielded lips, O captive breast!

He illuminates truth with beauty, and he does so

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by a choice of epithets that is almost faultless. He excels in literary taste, the one thing intolerable to the so-called "children of Nature," and yet so profound is it that a distinguished French writer has said "What is taste? Perhaps it is the soul."

Watson's finest trait is his soaring imagination and it counts most in dealing with things of the spirit. Who than he has touched more poignantly the one most haunting human thought?

THE GREAT MISGIVING

"Not ours," say some, "the thought of death to dread;
Asking no heaven, we fear no fabled hell:
Life is a feast, and we have banqueted—
Shall not the worms as well?

"The after-silence, when the feast is o'er,
And void the places where the minstrels stood,
Differs in nought from what hath been before,
And is nor ill nor good."

Ah, but the Apparition—the dumb sign—
The beckoning finger bidding me forego
The fellowship, the converse, and the wine,
The songs, the festal glow!

And ah, to know not, while with friends I sit,
And while the purple joy is passed about,
Whether 'tis ampler day divinelier lit
Or homeless night without;

And whether, stepping forth, my soul shall see
New prospects, or fall sheer—a blinded thing!
There is, O grave, thy hourly victory,
And there, O death, thy sting.

Here, as usual, he preserves that fine proportion between thought and line which constitutes literature in verse. One may look askance at a "literary" poet, but what does the adjective imply save that every word counts by its force and appropriateness, that there is not a syllable too little or too much, that the offered cup is always full to the brim but never overflows?

Of two metrical forms Watson is master: the pungent epigram and the inspiring sonnet. Here are two of these quatrains:

EPITAPH ON AN OBSCURE PERSON

Stranger, *these ashes were a Man*
Crushed with a grievous weight.
He had acquired more ignorance than
He could assimilate.

AN IMPOSSIBLE NOVELTY

There are, in Painting, Sculpture, Song,
A few new ways of being wrong;
But it is plain to most men's sight
There's no new way of being right.

Leaving aside the high-minded and courageous sonnets on the Boer War and "The Purple East," by which the "dauntless teller of truths unsweet" stirred England to the depths, we find this one on the approach of middle life finely paralleled in octave and sestet and most subtly human:

THE FRONTIER

At the hushed brink of twilight,—when, as though
Some solemn journeying phantom paused to lay
An ominous finger on the awestruck day,
Earth holds her breath till that great presence go,—
A moment comes of visionary glow,
Pendulous 'twixt the gold hour and the grey,
Lovelier than these, more eloquent than they
Of memory, foresight, and life's ebb and flow.

So have I known, in some fair woman's face,
While viewless yet was Time's more gross imprint,
The first, faint, hesitant, elusive hint
Of that invasion of the vandal years
Seem deeper beauty than youth's cloudless grace,
Wake subtler dreams, and touch me nigh to tears.

In this circumscribed space there is no room to sample the rich quarries of his longer poems—the tributes to Burns and Shelley, "Wordsworth's Grave," "The Eloping Angels," the "Ode on the Coronation of King Edward VII," and others. But the impression is the same throughout, that of a high standard of genuine poetry, admirable in scope as well as detail. While the volume is full of separate lines that rest in the memory as adequate to a hundred experiences, the poet's large treatment and his architectonic sense of proportion give roundness to his thought and a sense of satisfaction to his reader.

May William Watson, still in his vigor, live long to offer to this prosy and indifferent age the inspiration of a man wholly in earnest and wholly a poet.

Yet another Life of Christ is to be published shortly. It is the work of the late Robert Keable, who wrote many books on religious subjects and also on Tahiti, where he died. Sir Hall Caine's Life of Christ, on which he has been engaged for a considerable time, can also be expected soon.

Watson's Behaviorism

THE WAYS OF BEHAVIORISM. By JOHN B. WATSON. New York: Harper & Bros. 1928. $3.50.

Reviewed by JOSEPH JASTROW

IT is important to distinguish between behaviorism as a psychological position, and the specific tenets of Dr. Watson, who claims a proprietary right to the term. I shall make the distinction by confining the Watsonian variety between the double bars of quotation marks. Behaviorism refers to the generally accepted position of substantially all psychologists that their science deals with human behavior: "behaviorism" is an electric assemblage of doctrines approved by John B. Watson, together with a remarkable set of claims concerning their value, that involves a repudiation of the contributions of his fellow-psychologists. Such are the ways of "behaviorism" in the year 1928.

It was not always thus. Dr. Watson made important contributions to animal psychology and to specific phases of human psychology. He followed and developed the objective method in psychology—a position fully approved by his professional colleagues. At Johns Hopkins University he did important work on the native responses of infants. His "Behavior, An Introduction to Comparative Psychology" is a careful scientific survey containing many original contributions; his "Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist" continues largely in the same temper, but makes some extreme and more questionable statements, which a sympathetic critic might ascribe to an over-zealous advocacy. His "Behaviorism," a set of popular lectures, shows an amazing deterioration. Considering the uninformed clientèle to which it was addressed, its cavalierly treatment of what generally circulates as psychology is as questionable in taste as in logic. His recent pronouncements: "The Ways of Behaviorism" and "Psychological Care of Infant and Child" constitute astounding performances.

* * *

The "behaviorist's" stock in trade is rather limited, considering the business he claims to do. There is the conditioned reflex (generalized to the response), the nature and limitations of which are still in doubt. Yet the entire range of human habit and acquisition is explained as conditioning, and human conduct however complicated becomes predictable, because it may be spoken of as stimulus and response. "Why do men and women get married—why divorced—and what effect prohibition has on human behavior—woman suffrage? Let us study the problem as we would study the effect of continuous light upon the growth of a plant." Then there is the (by no means new) discovery of the few complete patterned responses in the new-born infant.

On these premises we are informed that everything is acquired by conditioning, though the truth is that if we were generally subject to "behavioristic" conditioning, behavior would be chaos and a rational life impossible. Heredity is declared a myth, and all the scientific workers in this field are dismissed as on the wrong track. The "behaviorist" will make of any ordinary infant whatever you choose to order. Insanity is a delusion of the psychiatrists not of the patient. The subconscious is a figment of another abnormal deviation, and Freud and the phrenologists are of one stripe. "In one sweeping assumption after another, the 'behaviorist' threw out the concepts both of mind and of consciousness, calling them carryovers from the church dogma of the Middle Ages." *Instinct* is another imaginary creation, likewise imagery; and thought is but verbalized or subvocal behavior. Like the brave little tailor, it is "seven at a blow"; and the "behavorist" chuckles as the giants fall, for to him they are pigmies. Yet the instrument of the "behaviorist" is not even a sword or a sling; it is merely a waste-basket. With everyone holding a different opinion consigned to oblivion, the "behaviorist" finds himself in full command, with decks cleared and no impediment of crew or cargo.

* * *

The intriguing question relates not to the ways of behaviorism, but asks how the "behaviorist" gets that way. His own explanation is that he is concerned with what men *do*. Using what others would call imagination, he becomes an emissary from Mars, hovers over New York, notes the scurrying movements of its inhabitants and brings back the momentous conclusion that these human ants *are going to work*. Now all is translucently clear. "Just think what a volume I could carry back to Mars on the behavior of New Yorkers if from some central position I could observe their whole twenty-four hour behavior for a few weeks or months." That volume would be as meaningless as the scratchings on the sand in a barnyard, until it is interpreted by just those instruments of psychology that the "behaviorist" repudiates and the true behaviorist utilizes. The "people are going to work!" Sheer inference! Nobody who didn't know infinitely more than what observers could see, could ever reach any such conclusion. Why not conclude that these creatures, whether by early conditioning or the peculiarities of their equilibrium apparatus, were so built that they couldn't see a hole without, like the rabbit in "Alice," running down it? How can a "behaviorist" ascertain that they are darting down into the subway on the way to work? And why are Washingtonians without this habit?

* * *

But why anything? In wonderland you at least know what set of rules you are staying away from; in "behavior"-land, which is supposed to be a land of prediction, the last thing you can predict is what the "behaviorist" will hold on any question. Why does it follow from "behaviorism" that when parents fondle their children, they are breeding neurotics and dependents? Yet Dr. Watson says so. What to make of it all I frankly don't know. So I appeal to others. An eminent scientist tells me it is preposterous nonsense, not worthy of scientific attention; another that it is an exhibition of colossal impertinence, that even granted that Watson is *the* superman of all times, he could hardly be so uniformly right and everybody else so incorrigibly wrong on so many different varieties of questions. I asked the question some years ago of a group of professional women who had listened to a course by Dr. Watson, and they replied: "We do not take him seriously," though one confessed: "I did so to begin with." I asked a Freudian, and he explained: Watson found early in his career that he had no *flair* for psychology, and so decided that he would call psychology whatever he found he could do; "behaviorism" is a form of compensation. I asked a fellow-psychologist and he sets forth that it is the desire to be different and attract attention; it is modernism in psychology by appealing to the allegedly ultra-scientific. I ask a business man and he says it is advertising. I ask a sociologist, and he says it is just an attempt to put something over, and Watson is laughing up his sleeve—doesn't believe a word of it. I ask a philosopher, and he says that that kind of mind, though shrewd and intelligent, is as devoid of a sense of logic as other able and worthy minds are devoid of a sense of humor. And I ask myself and give it up. But whatever it is in motive, in argument it is sophistry; and the constant fallacy is the fallacy of ignoring. Ignore all the evidence to the contrary on any position, and you can prove what you will, and incidentally disclose the folly of those who hold otherwise.

Perhaps we are all on the wrong scent. On the opening page we read: "There was possibly too little science—real science—in Freud's psychology, and hence it held its news value for only a relatively brief span of years." "Now the newspapers are beginning to feed it ("behaviorism") to the masses, but still in broken doses." Perhaps a new era is upon us and doctrines are to be judged by their news value. Perhaps the historian of the future will record: "In the early twentieth century Einstein put across his doctrine of relativity; much credit belongs to his publicity agent." There is only one man who can solve the puzzle of the ways of the "behaviorist," and he does not choose to tell.

The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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Published weekly, by The Saturday Review Co., Inc., Henry S. Canby, President; Roy E. Larsen, Vice-President; Noble A. Catheart, Secretary-Treasurer, 25 West 45th Street, New York. Subscription rates, per year, postpaid; in the U. S. and Mexico, $3.50; in Canada, $4; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere, $4.50. All business communications should be addressed to 25 West 45th Street, New York. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 1, 1879. Vol. V. No. 3.

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Whoopee

SHOW GIRL. By J. P. McEvoy. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1928. $2.

Reviewed by FLORENZ ZIEGFELD

WHILE I have produced many revues this is my premier performance as a reviewer. Perhaps I stand too close to the theatre to be a disinterested and dispassionate critic of a novel dealing with the stage and its people, for I love what is known as "show business" and have given my life to it. It concerns me so closely and so vitally that I seldom read stories of acting and music for fear that I will be mortally offended by a lack of knowledge, sympathy, and intelligent understanding on the part of the authors. I have a few bedside books about music and the theatre that I read and reread and I recommend them as works of genius. To me they are true reports of the lives of singers, musicians, and actors. These novels are "Maurice Guest," by Henry Handel Richardson; "Evelyn Innes," "Sister Teresa," and "A Mummer's Wife," by George Moore; and "A Mummer's Tale," by Anatole France. These great writers tell their fables and stage manage their characters honestly without being cruel or kind or malicious. They have humor and satire, but the humor never becomes hokum and the satire is never bitter. The curious and interesting race of public entertainers is shown to us fleshly for the most part because they are, in spite of their exaggerated emotions and temperaments, materialists. The musicians rise higher into the realm of spirit, but they, too, are human, all too human. Their lives are like April days blended of sun and showers with the tragedy of age always menacing them, for, more than elsewhere, in the theatre, "men shut their doors against a setting sun."

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Mr. McEvoy views the theatre as a great joke where clowns and hoofers and singers, chorus girls, authors, actors, dance directors, and composers, meet in a swirl of laughs and gags and whoopee and regard everything as being "all in fun." His new novel, "Show Girl," is a typical volume of American humor. It is the world of the comic strip. Dixie Dugan, the heroine, Eppus and Kibbitzer, the managers, and Doyle, the author, are characterized in a series of amusing chapters some of which would make snappy "blackouts" for current revues. "Show Girl" is show business "hoked up" to the saturation point. It has smart touches of observation, a lot of what passes for wit on Broadway, and above all speed. The action races by and every typographical ingenuity is used to emphasize and amplify the "punch stuff." McEvoy has written a vastly amusing novel. I recommend it for summer reading. It will be, I suppose, a comedy bible of the "Follies," for both the show girls and the dancers give it their approval. McEvoy is a lusty fellow in his fun and writes with gusto. He reminds me of one of those popular comedians who invited to a party feels that he must be entertaining every minute and succeeds in being so. But after reading "Show Girl" and having had your fill of laughter thank the author and then pray that all the folks of the theatre might be as merry as his comedy creations, escaping heartbreak, failure, age, poverty, treachery, ingratitude, change of public taste, dimming of early gifts, loss of creative power, sickness, and all the other pains and penalties of the stage and concert room. One enjoys greatly but one may suffer greatly, too, in a crowded theatrical career, and only the stout-hearted Ulyssean type can weather all storms until a late final curtain. For too many the curtain falls early and forever.

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I know McEvoy well, having produced a number of his sketches in the "Follies," and I was sponsor for his first revue, "The Comic Supplement." Even when I threw things out of the show he was up there taking a bow. McEvoy and "Bugs" Baer are the only two I ever heard of who would steal bows to hisses. Here's the way he would review "Show Girl" himself:

> This is a great book, a wonderful book, a marvelous book, a stupendous book—such speed, such verve, such élan, such such. It's your *Broadway and mine*. Girls and lights and jazz. All the sounds and the scents, the harshness, the tenderness, the whimsy and pathos, the smiles, the tears, the triumphs, the heart-aches, all and more are in this book. What a book this "Show Girl"! What a writer this man McEvoy!

That gives you a rough idea. And don't think I am exaggerating. I recall one time Augustine Duncan was rehearsing the Back Porch scene in which Fields and Dooley appeared in "The Comic Supplement" and later in the "Follies." Everything was going along nicely and quietly on the stage when suddenly inextinguishable laughter started way back in the rear of the house. One of the stage managers went back and located the disturber and put him out. It was only when he got the intruder into the light he discovered to his consternation he had ejected the author. After that we had to make a rule to keep McEvoy out of the theatre during the rehearsal of his comedy sketches because he laughed so loud at his own stuff he disturbed the actors. Fortunately for me, the audience always laughed, too, so I have forgiven him.

A Schoolboy of Russia

DIARY OF A COMMUNIST SCHOOLBOY. By N. OGNYOV. Translated from the Russian by ALEXANDER WERTH. New York: Payson & Clarke. 1928. $2.50.

Reviewed by ARTUUR RUHL

THIS Diary is said to be the work of a Russian school-teacher, Rozanov, who writes under the name Ognyov, and to have been widely read in Russia, and in translation elsewhere on the Continent. It is a work of fiction, in any case, and so far as American readers are concerned, may be taken as it comes, like any other story of a boy—like "Stalky" or "Tom Sawyer."

Its strength lies in its endeavor to present, without argument or any of the political preoccupations which overburden most writing about contemporary Russia, the day-to-day states of mind of a post-revolution Russian youngster of high-school age. And it is such a relief to run across any such artistic treatment of Russian revolutionary phenomena, the whole thing is jotted down with such simplicity, and is so alive with authentic slang and the mood of the moment, that it is likely to be welcomed as something more than it really is by those who are fed up with the usual verbiage or, because of their own adventures in Russia, feel themselves, as they read, back in Moscow again.

Its weakness, I should say, or one of them, so far as the uninformed foreign reader is concerned, is its lack of background and atmospheric texture. If you've seen the sort of quarters the present Russian generation live in; the clothes they wear, the food they eat; seen the red posters and banners, the crowds milling slowly through the boulevards on a warm Sunday afternoon or rowing on the river, and seen innumerable bands of young folks, just like Riabtsov and his schoolmates, starting off for picnics in the country—and of course Russians have seen all these things—the boy may stand out round and clearly enough in his own particular air.

But taken just as he comes, by the reader who doesn't know Russia, he will probably seem a bit flat and thin, and after some two hundred pages of his intensely earnest, adolescent wrangling over this and that, more incredible than in fact he is. In short, fresh and good as the little story is, it is written for a special audience, who must fill in the gaps from their own experience.

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Many of young Riabtsov's adventures and worries, and those of his schoolmates, are those common to adolescence. The peculiarly Russian part of the book is, of course, the pupils' habit of managing their own school affairs and discussing everything, including methods of teaching and discipline and personal ethics as if they were a self-governing republic, and the revolutionary "ideology," as the Bolsheviks are so fond of saying, which permeates all their thinking and behavior.

As a matter of fact, the school is almost a microcosm of present-day Russia itself. "Black Zoya," with her hysterical fits and her fondness for graveyards and ghosts, is a sort of childish symbol of the surviving obscurantism of the old days. Lina, a bit further "Left," might possibly be regarded as standing for old-fashioned "sentimental" Liberalism, while Sylva, with her clear-eyed downrightness, represents the Bolshevik notion of the woman of the future. Riabtsov himself, with his impatience for what he regards as sham, his bumptiousness, and his insistence on "thinking things through," according to the true gospel, as he understands it, of economic determinism, is a slower-thinking, more blundering, but equally vigorous masculine counterpart of Sylva.

This is, of course, reading into the story a little more than meets the casual eye. On the surface, it is a lively, and often amusing, picture of day-to-day schoolboy adventures, worries, and problems. The teachers, also, stand for various trends and wings, and the author has his fun with them, too. There is "Almakfish," as the pupils dub, Soviet-fashion, "Alexei Maksimitch Fisher," whose one comment, on any sort of action, is that "quantitatively, it represents the abundance of the epoch; and qualitatively, it stands beyond good and evil." And there is a frequent recurrence of the word "liquidate"—"liquidate your ignorance," "liquidate difficulties," etc.,—which is actually used nowadays in Russia, just as it is in the diary. You will be amused, and perhaps enlightened, as well, by young Riabtsov's first-hand experiences with the Dalton Plan.

There will be those, of course, who will regard the diary as only a more than usually subtle bit of "propaganda"—"bourgeois" values being run down and "revolutionary" values being run up, through seemingly guileless school-children. It doesn't seem to me necessary to take the book in this way—a writer would need to be almost superhumanly detached to write in Russia today, untouched by the common air. The significant thing about the story is that it is a story, and that its arguments, if any, are inherent in the characters rather than expressed.

Footprints on the Sand

GEORGE SAND, THE SEARCH FOR LOVE. By MARIE JENNY HOWE. New York: The John Day Company. 1927. $5.

THE SEVEN STRINGS OF THE LYRE. The Romantic Life of George Sand, 1804-1876. By ELIZABETH W. SCHERMERHORN. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1927. $4.

Reviewed by CHRISTIAN GAUSS
Princeton University

THESE two latest books on George Sand are an index of what has happened not only to Madame Dudevant but to us. Let us first consider George. She has ceased to be a woman of letters and in neither volume is any serious attempt made to reappraise her position in literary history. Her standing as a novelist has been taken by Mrs. Howe for granted, but seems to have been disregarded as a matter of relatively little moment by Miss Schermerhorn. George has become one of the curiosities of the nineteenth century, a sort of campus character in the academy of literature. A good name in letters is no longer better than many adventures. A life is more than many novels and interesting experiments in love than the Victorian fine gold of a literary reputation. George has been stripped of her titles to distinction. The traditional drapery has been allowed to slip from her shoulders and she stands before us in rather sheer femininity. In Miss Schermerhorn's book she is at least still warmly human. In Mrs. Howe's she has become a bit gaunt, a rather chilling symbol of revolt, of woman's rights. She has become a sort of depoetized Shelley of the opposite sex, perhaps for this reason to me less engaging than the author of "Indiana" and "Mauprat," whom we thought we knew in the days before we had become so entirely emancipated.

Considerable new material has become available in the last few years. The fourth and last volume of Mme. Karénine's somewhat over-extended, but otherwise acceptable, life appeared in 1926, as did the "Journal Intime" and nearly all of the material on her relations with Aurélien de Sèze. Some scholars regret that these documents were edited by Mme. Lauth-Sand, the granddaughter of George. There is much more that has not yet seen the light, including the correspondence with Balzac in the Lovenjoul Collection at Chantilly, so ably presided over by that excellent Balzacian and Sandist, M. Marcel Bouteron. This does not seem to have been consulted by either of the new biographers nor would it seem greatly to have interested either of them.

Mrs. Howe's volume is really a protest against man's inhumanity to woman. She tells us that

> Unfortunately for her reputation, most of her biographers have been old-fashioned men who regarded her from a viewpoint of established feminine traditions. To the modern mind, it is evident that George Sand's real fault

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lay not in her lack of submissiveness, not in her insistent spirit of revolt, but in the fact that these qualities were embodied in a woman where they did not belong, rather than in a man where they would have been deemed admirable and even distinguished.

George Sand was so far in advance of the women of her day that she was driven to associate almost exclusive with men. As a consequence she adopted their standards.

Occasionally she overdoes this. Even before Mrs. Howe and Miss Schermerhorn took up their pens, the best biography was already by a woman, Madame Karénine. So was the worst, that of Miss Thomas. The two new biographers only succeed in falling somewhere in between. Both have tried to be interesting: Mrs. Howe by pressing a thesis and Miss Schermerhorn by dramatizing and arranging in rather unsuccessful imitation of the manner of Maurois and Ludwig.

* * *

Mrs. Howe tells us, for instance, that because women were unwelcome in the realm of letters, her own name could not well appear upon her writings. She forgets that Mlle de Scudery, Mme de Lafayette, and Mme de Staël, all of them women and novelists, had not suffered because of this disability. Mme de Sévigny has never been attacked on this score and in George's own time, male critics and the French Academy created a reputation and a public for Louise Colet far beyond her deserts. Why not let it suffice that having collaborated with Sandeau in her first novel under the name Jules Sand, when the partnership broke up, George, as her share of the firm's good will, took the name Sand and after some hesitation profixed the Berrichon *Georges* and then the simpler George which she was to render illustrious.

It is natural but regrettable that Mrs. Howe should intellectualize all of George's love affairs. She could not help it that everybody except her husband fell in love with her. She was a woman of deep sentiment and some sentimentality in the heyday of romanticism. She was what the French call *une impulsive* and in an age when love was itself a virtue she too fell in love often, now and then awkwardly and out of season, as in the case of Pagello and the resumption with Musset. Mrs. Howe's error lies in treating George Sand somewhat as if she had been a suffragette and forgetting that all this did not happen in 1930 but a hundred years earlier. To understand it one must still go to a literary historian. Charles Maurras in his "Les Amants de Venise" shows he understands love's fashion in that time and passes judgment upon them rather than upon Musset or Sand or poor, stupid, victimized Pagello. It is only this fundamental misconception of the literary men and manners of the time that makes it possible for Mrs. Howe to speak of that boor, Gustave Planche, as "a sensitive little boy," or to imply that to Pagello at any time George Sand was like Dante's Beatrice. 1833 did not make love in terms of the thirteenth century nor yet of the twentieth. So, too, when she tells us that in 1831, George Sand dressed like a man *only* to save money we are tempted to wonder whether she smoked her cigars for the same reason.

* * *

If Mrs. Howe takes George's literary reputation for granted, to Miss Schermerhorn it does not matter at all. She ascribes "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" to Dumas and her knowledge of French is occasionally hesitant. She does not realize that the *Malgache* as applied to Jules Néraud is not merely an odd nickname but means that he came from Madagascar, nor that *Pylade* is only the French and not the English for Pylades. But to her all this does not signify. She sees in the romantic George one more subject for a biographical romance.

What has happened to us is that we have become so realistic that we are losing interest even in realistic fiction. We must have facts and persons once actually in the flesh. We can only hope the mood is passing and that soon we shall again either accept the art of the novelist and his imagination or go the full distance and demand that biographers give us only the real facts about real people.

Richard Whiteing, who a number of years ago sprang into sudden prominence with his novel, "No. 5, John Street," died recently. Whiteing had worked for thirty years in obscurity as an editorial writer for London papers, when at sixty he became the literary talk of the season. Unfortunately he remained a one-book novelist, never, except for this single work, having produced a tale that caught the public fancy.

The Bowling Green

Granules from an Hourglass

ONE of the pleasantest midsummer stories is told by O. H. P. Some friends of his, he avers, have a small hairy dog which suffers greatly from heat. So much so that for their pet's comfort they often put a small electric fan on the floor. This is highly relished by the small hairy dog, who sits as close to it as possible, turning himself leisurely this way and that to cool. He sits so close to the whirr, however, that when his custodians leave the room they turn off the fan, for fear he may damage himself.

One very warm afternoon lately the custodians left the dog indoors while they went out on some errands. The fan was on the floor as usual, but not running. While they were absent there came one of those magically sudden changes of temperature that New York sometimes enjoys. The wind shifted round to the north, the heavy torrid air blew away, a cool breeze came rippling in over the window-sills, sweeping through the apartment. When they returned, the small hairy dog was sitting as close as possible to the motionless fan, grinning and turning himself to and fro to enjoy the draught.

I do not doubt that there may be excellent political and theological analogies to this episode; it is the kind of anecdote I most enjoy, for it is not only a story but also a fable.

* * *

Among the many agreeable mysteries of our civilization one that now and then gives me a mild access of ponders is the random distribution of those little cardboard folders of matches. You find several in your pocket when you get home after a day around town, and the game is to see how diverse the collection may be. Most of them, which advertise products of the sort hopefully known as "nation-wide," are understandable enough: if that form of publicity is of any use, it is useful wherever it may find itself. For example, taking nine folders of matches which have accumulated in my hands in the last two days, I find that two bear the legend of Gem Double Life Blades, one Wrigley's, one Ex-Lax, one Dill's Best Tobacco, one Bromo Seltzer, one the Hotel Hamilton (14th and K Sts., Washington, D. C.), one Condax Cigarettes. It is conceivable, though not probable, that I might some day have a use for any or all of those utensils, drugs, or hostelries; none of them, up to now, have entered my life. But the ninth match-folder, the one that gives me the ponders, says A REAL STORE IN A REAL TOWN, "QUALITY," O. J. DAHL, GWINNER, N. DAK.—With not unnatural curiosity I wonder how it can benefit Mr. Dahl's affairs to have his matchfolders distributed round New York or Long Island. It is unlikely, alas, that Mr. Dahl and I will ever meet, or that I will ever have opportunity to verify the reality of Gwinner, North Dakota. But it is a gallant gesture on someone's part—perhaps the grocery jobbers whose picture of a can of corn appears on the reverse of the folder; or perhaps the Ohio Match Co., Wadsworth, O., whose name is printed very small on one end. Such small problems keep one happy in the smoking car and minister to one's geographical curiosity. Gwinner, my atlas tells me, is in Sargent County, and had a population in 1915, of 300. Here's luck!

* * *

Why is it always so warm on the days when one goes down to see people off on a steamer? At this very moment, while I sit here with all mid-afternoon blazing outside the window, the comfortable *Dresden* of the Nord-Deutscher Lloyd is crumbling through the green water south of Long Island, and the cheerful kinsman who is off with his family for a year in Geneva is probably having his first mug of good Bremen beer. He is eminently a philosopher, and the *Dresden*—the ship that the vociferous Keyserling and the probably more subtle Salvador de Madariaga both patronized—is a ship for ruminators. Not since before the War had I seen so many Teutons gathered together as I saw in a few minutes' visit to the N. D. L. pier; it took me back to old times and old comedies. I hold no grudge against the world for being human.

So, while P. K., the philosophic kinsman, dips his neb into the German brew, I sit here in an August warmth and guzzle a fifth tumbler of grape juice and wonder if I can get through this copy in time to go swimming. It would be much more literary, I reflect, to pretend a pang of jealousy for those who are shoving off for foreign tour; and I'm not saying that there are not twinges of nostalgia, at this time of year, for the pale blue crockery of the Wagon-Lits dining car or the formaldehyde-tasting eggs of ocean cuisine. It would be dramatic and jocund to utter a loud cry about getting away from political jabber and $8-a-pint rye and all the books one has to read for the Book of the Month Club. But there are moments when a clear breeze comes down Fifth Avenue, and the modernist window-settings in the shops are livelier than anything you'll see in Paris, and there are still places where you can watch the frost gather on the tumbler of mint julep, and a full moon makes as bright a pathway on Long Island Sound as it does on the Lake of Geneva. There's much too much fuss made about hot weather, which is best to work in; and I never found any of the recherché or spasmodist magazines of Montparnasse half as instructive as our own well-loved *Variety*. I've seen the Old Mandarin, on a hot muggy day, standing at the open door at the front end of a subway express, clutching his parasol in one hand and his briefcase in the other, his robes fluttering in the cool simoon, ecstatic to watch the underside of New York fly past, the blue and green lights punctuating the gloom, the station platforms like underground caves of light. The Gesta Newyorkorum are as well worth scrutiny as any others; and there's 306 feet of water-front out on Lloyd's Neck . . . so we turn back to the grape juice; and it's not sour, either.

* * *

I haven't heard any comments on that gorgeous batch of excerpts (in the June *Bookman*) from the Spanish wit who calls himself Ramón. If you missed them, and still have access to that issue of the magazine, look them up. They are, in one of Ramón's own phrases, the blue flame of human alcohol. I am the more positive of their superlative worth because I have heard nothing about them in the usual channels of rumblebumble. They consist of merry, bitter, and casual little trivia of inward observation; sometimes sentimental, sometimes pure iodine. When will Angel Flores, who introduced them in *The Bookman*, give us some more? They are worthy to stand beside Chekhov's Notebook; they are more condensed than Pearsall Smith's little sweetbreads. It would be unseemly to pick out just two or three for quotation; those who are worthy of them will look them up.

* * *

> The most popular movietone joke this week is about the cinema official who decided there would have to be a re-take of certain scenes at a bathing beach in which several of the actors spoke lines. "I can't," explained the objector, "hear the final 'k' in 'swimming.'" —THE NEW YORKER, August 4

That may have been the most popular jape among the New Yorkers in the week of August 4, but subscribers to *Variety* had been lip-reading it the week of July 18. Placable as we are, the number of wise-cracks that are lifted from *Variety* without acknowledgment sometimes irks us a little. Presumably you are aware of the old legend about the synthetic-slang fictioneers of the *S. E. P.* and *Collier's* schools who are supposed to pray nightly for Jack Conway of *Vanity*, imploring that nothing may interfere with his health and fecundity. Con is probably the most pilfered-from author in America. In the argot of pickpockets, he is the Dip's Delight. His gorgeous stuff in *Variety* isn't known to the general public, and the snappers-up can lift his poke at will.

* * *

Mr. Ford Madox Ford, lately the Guest Critic of the *Herald-Tribune*, once the close friend and collaborator of Joseph Conrad, was in New York not long ago; and a young literary idolator explained to Mr. Elmer Davis that he was going down to call on Mr. Ford in the hope of hearing some reminiscences of the great Pole. "Ah," said Mr. Davis, with that dangerous Augustan glitter of his, "Youth in Quest of His Conrad."

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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Recent Fiction and Drama

Modern Satire

ALL AT SEA. By OSBERT AND SACHEVERELL SITWELL. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1928. $2.50.

Reviewed by WALTER F. KOHN

EVERY so often—too rarely, alas!—a play or novel comes along in which the satire is all the more seething because it is the expression not alone of amused criticism, but of outraged moral indignation. Fifteen or twenty years ago such a play was Benavente's "La Noche del Sabado." The only recent example of it that I recall in English fiction was Aldous Huxley's "Antic Hay." Now a short time ago there was published Osbert and Sacheverell Sitwell's "All At Sea." For this play, subtitled "a social tragedy in three acts for first-class passengers only," is a magnificent and relentless indictment of our artificial existence.

The action of the play is negligible, concerning itself almost solely with the ingenious attempts of Peter Leach, an impecunious newspaper correspondent, "a self-appointed entertainment and luxury tax," to swindle his divorced wife into supporting him. He succeeds through an elaborate series of clownish intrigues which are in themselves bitter comments on the individuals and incidents involved, and on Leach's own selfish insincerity.

But it is the characters of this side-splitting tragedy who are such perfect types and syntheses of certain tendencies of our age. There is Playstruck, a British peer interested in the drama, and sufficiently balanced (when not too drunk) to see the other characters somewhat objectively. He is escorting his sister, who has film aspirations, to Hollywood. Interest in these aspirations is heightened by the presence of a famous American movie actress. Then there is Lulu, the ship's cocktail shaker and bartender, who sees all and knows all, including the fact that it is best to keep his mouth shut. He is Boswell for the whole list of passengers. Then there is Malakoff, a professional Russian sponging on the world by virtue of his very occasional musical performances, his picturesque attitudes, and his very frequent and pseudo-weighty dicta on Art with a capital A. There is also Mr. Jameson, a widowed clergyman who tries to be "modern" (he would put it in quotes). Jameson talks golf much more than he plays it, and prides himself on providing an epithet for anything and everything with or without provocation. The epithets are of course all gleaned from Bartlett's "Familiar Quotations."

Jameson has a daughter who psychoanalyzes everybody and everything; but the authors have somewhat mitigated this obnoxious trait by stating that she alone of all the women has a distinctive appearance, since the others all look alike by virtue of having had their faces lifted.

This mêlée provides an ideal setting for the satirization of almost anything you please in contemporary life; and very few things have been spared. Psychoanalysis and the movies, professional Russians and equally professional lionizers have already been mentioned. There are in addition portrayals of the modern Protestant Church, Ouspensky, theosophy, cabarets, Gurdieff, American prohibition, the theatre, professional tourists, golf, dancing, John Drinkwater, international politics, dietetics, and dozens of other contemporary interests.

But let the authors speak through the voice of Vladimir Expensky: "Have you that apprehension of the hitherto, brothers and sisters? Have you communed with your cosmic consciousness towards the ultimate wherewithal? I can lead you up into those mountain tops of the higher morality, and we will bathe, brothers and sisters, in those crystal streams bubbling up out of the future. Yes, my brethren, we are all brothers and sisters, all leaves of the same old tree—different yet alike as are the waves of the ocean. That grand, that comforting old Father Ocean of ours who is now nursing so many of our friends on his broad bosom. Luto Slavsky and Maxim Kapsokalivit, even the Moofti, Boris Bogusslavovich, agree with me in worshipping that ultimate paternity of our Father Ocean. In what then does ultimate paternity consist? It constitutes the fathering of the beyond. In fact to put it colloquially, the Higher the Fewer. . . . . Remember my message, sisters, *remember my last little word.* Pray to the Consciousness that it may master your Cosmic Egoism. I pray for you, and together we are on the holy road toward that bright dawn, the Wherewithal . . ."

This appreciation would be incomplete without some mention of the delightful preface, which occupies more than half the book. Entitled "A Few Days in an Author's Life," it is a diabolical record of Mr. Osbert Sitwell's experiences with the critics and with the British theatre in general in connection with the broadcasting of one of his sister's plays by radio. It is a long time since any writer has delivered such trenchant criticism of the contemporary English stage as is found in this preface. And the observations are doubly interesting and convincing in that each of them is the spontaneous reaction to the author's actual experience.

Life and a Romantic

HER KNIGHT COMES RIDING. By JOHN V. A. WEAVER. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1928.

Reviewed by ROBERT B. MACDOUGALL

MR. Weaver has written the tragedy of a romantic. We see the gradual collapse of Fanny Williams's world under the battering of externals. Her father had given her a dream world largely founded on Scott's novels and the Arthurian legend, but he died before he could help her to reconcile it with the brutal realities of Brooklyn schools, Brooklyn tenements, Brooklyn offices. And inasmuch as he could not be with her in her time of confusion, he was no less responsible for her defeat than was her mother, a strange, inscrutable woman who (in Fanny's eyes) delighted in being unsympathetic and even hostile towards her daughter. Fanny's plight, never the result of anyone's calculated selfishness or brutality, is intensely pitiful. It almost makes us agree with those audacious experimenters who wish to disband the family and to bring up children in impersonal institutions. Without the interference of her parents Fanny would probably have become a happy woman, a real person—not, as she does turn out, a stereotype, a mere counterfeit of herself. In many ways Mr. Weaver has here told the tragedy of countless men and women whom the ironing-out process of life has dessicated and debased.

"Her Knight Comes Riding" is no solemnity chanted in a monotone, however. Anyone who has read and admired Mr. Weaver's poetry knows that he could not, for all his penetrating sense of human unhappiness, be doleful for long. We are grateful for his precise observation of American life, often humorous, often gently cynical or chiding; we bless him for his ear so delicately attuned to the idiom of the sidewalks, and we note with relief that he is unaffected, that he writes as a modest and forthright gentleman. The novel can be merely good entertainment for those who do not wish to bother themselves with ethical or sociological implications. Probably three out of every five readers will call the book depressing, but even these sensitive plants will have found sufficient amusement and interest along the way to keep them from realizing their depression until the very last chapter. Adult readers will enjoy themselves.

Certain faults seem fairly obvious. What, for instance, is the good of the Magnus episode? It is not convincing, and it bulks over-large; furthermore, why need the father-knight obsession be further strengthened at the expense of credibility? The flow of the narrative itself is not beyond adverse criticism; Mr. Weaver is inclined to telescope his incidents at climactic moments, a tendency that results in momentary obscurity rather than the hoped for rapidity of action. But the novel stands as a distinct success, interesting in many ways.

A Gay Novel

JAVA-JAVA. By BYRON STEEL. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1928. $2.50

HERE is a most original and entertaining piece of light fiction. It is slightly reminiscent of work by certain other contemporary writers, but it would be misleading to make an explicit comparison. Be it sufficient to say that Mr. Steel, having gaily polished off Ben Johnson last year, now turns clown and gives us a wholly lunatic yet never merely silly novel. He gathers together a set of characters such as never were; shuffles them around Paris, the South Seas, Javanese jungles, and mixes them up in a series of events so fantastic that we almost come to believe that fiction is stranger than truth. The book is at times broadly farcical, at times subtly satirical; ingeniously inventive, it swings buoyantly along with a charming and persuasive self-confidence. And what does it all amount to? Just this: it will make the reader laugh, and chuckle knowingly, and then laugh again. Is that not sufficient?

"Java-Java" is rich in comic character. Mr. Doyle, the quartermaster of the *Claribel*, had once been a taxi-driver in New York; now strangely philosophical, he adds the only illusion of respectability to the wanderers in the jungle. Julie, an Asiatic beauty, having been not unwillingly shanghaied for the pleasure markets of Paris, turns out to be a perfect composite of the Swiss Family Robinson and a model Boy Scout, enabling the party, through her knowledge of Javanese flora and fauna, to escape the unicorns and other noxious invaders of the terrorized camp. And then there is Andrew, who may be twenty years old or sixty, a simpleton or a wise man—we never know. Nor is our affection set on these three to the exclusion of Catherine and Philip, the inter-continental lovers; Eric, the appealing but destitute aviator; Helena and Iris, the nuns with a taste for expensive cigarettes; or the Mayor of Venice, who by a low and dastardly stratagem cleared the Grand Canal of an aquatic traffic jam. A score of other extravagant personages are constantly doing and saying the unexpected.

What incidents are to be commended at the expense of others? We are afraid that none can be singled out as especially quaint and delightful. All Mr. Steel's characters have the habit of launching out without provocation on intense and diagrammatic histories of themselves, histories fit to decorate a D. N. B. of some lunar empire; they are simply immense. Very likely the whole episode of Philip's signing as Third on the *Claribel* is the best part of the book—the *Claribel* that was to carry selected brown and ochre ladies from way-ports of the Orient to an appreciative Paris. There is deft, accurate humor throughout this sequence of pages.

Naturally there are slow spots in "Java-Java." But they are insignificant when we regard the novel as a whole. If we were Dorothy Parker, we should have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Steel had done a perfectly swell job. As it is, we go on record that "Java-Java" deserves trial by a large and intelligent public; it will not be found wanting in gaiety and wit.

A Tale of Adventure

EXTREMES MEET ON SECRET SERVICE. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1928. $2.50 net.

Reviewed by FRANCES LAMONT ROBBINS

THIS is a good story, and one which should keep the most wayward interest from wandering back to actualities. There is plenty of real, reverberating thunder in it, and not too much blood for warm weather. But it should not be selected for the hottest day because it opens with an exhaustingly vivid description of heat in a blazing white city of Asia Minor.

Since the story is one of adventure, dependent upon surprise and suspense, it cannot be told in a review. Roger Waterlow, a Navy man who has been, as a lieutenant, dismissed from his ship for drunkenness and who thereupon resigned from the king's navy to go into Black Sea shipping, has gone back into service during the war and, longing for the command of a "Q-ship" in the Mediterranean, has been sent, instead, as a secret service agent to a small neutral state near Turkey. There he has gathered together a staff of spies, officially named after the English poets. Opposing these unofficial servants of Britain are the legation people, stolid men, impressed by gold-lace and scornful of espionage, and bored women, ready to exchange diplomatic secrets for an evening's flirtation. And a third group is composed of native court and army men, German in affiliations, studiously neutral in appearance. There are, too, a German officer and a beautiful girl of doubtful nationality and allegiance, a dancer at the local café and a guest at Madame Bonbon's.

Out of all these people, who become round and tangible under his skilful hand, and out of their conflicting interests, Compton Mackenzie has made a plausible and highly entertaining story. His gift for characterization was never more marked than in this book which a less able or more supercilious writer might have written with a careless pen, knowing that almost any adventure story will sell, anyway. And Mackenzie's descriptive talents are fully used in the making of a background which has none of the usual flimsy, back-drop quality which one associates with the setting of exotic adventure in books. The story of "Extremes Meet" is a dramatic mixture of cross purposes, secret risks, ludicrous failures, and unexpected rewards. It is not only absorbing, but also very amusing. There is wit in it, sly irony, and raw humor. The over-nice reader will find some of the situations indelicate. But the whole book is washed over with Compton Mackenzie's languid elegance of style. Admirers of his early work, if they have persevered through the disappointments of many inconsequential books, will find much to please them in his latest.

Border-Line Love

CONFLICTS. By STEFAN ZWEIG. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. New York: The Viking Press. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

THREE studies of border-line love make up Stefan Zweig's "Conflicts." The first, "Four-and-Twenty Hours," a novelette in length, tells the surprising story of an English widow, who, after forty-four years of absolutely conventional life, finds herself suddenly, for twenty-four hours, a quite unaccountable and hitherto unsuspected person, after which she returns to her normal habit of being. But during these four-and-twenty hours she has accepted the rôle of prostitute thrust upon her through her own passionate interest in a strange youth, young enough to be her son, and his easily explicable misapprehension of her interest. A double introduction and a story within a story complicate needlessly a tale which seems, by reason of its subtle involved psychology, to demand the most direct treatment possible.

In the manner of their telling the other two stories in the volume are much more satisfactory. "A Failing Heart" has an elemental simplicity which makes the agony of the despised and despairing father very much more than an individual Gethsemane. In recounting this "failure" of a heart, Stefan Zweig has adjusted his values with such nicety that his effects are gained through contrasts in degrees of emotion rather than through one emotion thrown into relief by another. The third "conflict" is that in the life of a German professor whose love for one of his young students runs a tortured and tortuous course to the confession which ends the relationship between the two men. The individualizing of the characters prevents this "Episode in the Early Life of Privy Councillor D." from being a mere case-history from the files of some clinic of homosexuality. The translation of these three stories, by Eden and Cedar Paul, has the double virtue of not seeming to be a translation and yet carrying a foreign flavor in idiom which keeps one conscious that the book was not originally written in English.

The Days of Christ

WHEN HE CAME TO HIMSELF. By LOUIS TUCKER. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1928. $2.

THE resemblance of Mr. Tucker's novel of the time of Christ to the ever-flourishing "Ben Hur" of General Lew Wallace, is neither accidental nor plagiaristic. We have the author's word for this. "Ben Hur" tells the story of a good man who knew the Messiah; "When He Came To Himself" aims to show the effect of contact with Jesus upon the life and character of a bad man. The scenes of the novel are as numerous and varied as those of a moving picture "spectacle." The action moves from the luxury of fortress-palaces to the swarming poverty of byways. The people of the tale seem a trifle self-conscious about relating themselves to the times in which they lived and explaning their ideas on morals and manners (they are particularly concerned with the pros and cons of nudity and semi-nudity) but this little help towards orientation is not likely to offend anyone who will be interested in the book. Mr. Tucker acknowledges Edersheim's "Life of Jesus the Messiah" as his source book in all matters of scholarship concerning the life and teachings of the Christ.

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Books of Special Interest

The Family

MOTHERHOOD AND ITS ENEMIES. By CHARLOTTE HALDANE. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc. 1928. $2.

THE FAMILY IN THE MAKING. By MARY BURT MESSER. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1928. $3.50.

Reviewed by MARGARET GRAY BLANTON

AUTHORS should stipulate with their publishers to the effect that they will take smaller royalties if the publishers will refrain from over-introducing them on the jacket. Like the chairman who over-introduces a speaker he merely sells the audience a wish for a rain check. The jacket on "Motherhood and Its Enemies" states that "the place of sex and motherhood in the free world of the modern woman has never heretofore been worked out" and it adds "she may startle the old fashioned by her candor and originality." Mrs. Haldane's book is a restatement of many unproven pieces of research and opinion as though they were "gospel truth." She breathes platitudes as though they were the very essence of novel thinking.

The thesis of her book seems to be well stated in her discussion of the biological factors. "For thousands of years custom has so divided their spheres that women have behaved in regard to men, much as the egg does in relation to the sperm. They have tended, ever since society became more or less fixed, to remain at home, carrying out duties which did not require much initiative, forethought, or strenuous physical activity," and the remainder of the book seems to be a plea for life to return to the good old days of the womanly woman. What—one is inclined to ask first off—was particularly "eggy" about the life of the frontier woman, the peasant, or even the American farm woman of today? What is particularly inactive or lacking in strenuousness about the washtub, or scrubbing, or the tending of large families (which fill her with great admiration)? What was lacking in the need of initiative and forethought in the care and training of children? What was eggy or inactive about getting up before daybreak to cook breakfast as opposed to waiting until it was cooked and then eating it? There is a whole school of what might be called "egg and sperm" thinkers who picture women as eternally sitting on the pillow doing fancy work, lapping at a dish of cream at intervals, while man dashes gallantly around on the back of a horse slaying any enemy of the family who happened to be up and out early. The presumption that the only "real" activity involves the use of the distance ceptors in horseback riding and long distance hiking—and that it was only undertaken by the male, should be laid away, now, along with the "primitive race" fallacy!

The real quarrel with Mrs. Haldane's book lies in her continued assumption of sequence, of cause and effect in what might better be considered as parallel occurrences. She repeatedly assumes that the social attitude of a given group has been caused by its religion. Even the college Freshman is familiar with the possibility that man made God in his own image and that the temple "drive" may have been patterned on the home "drive." With all her seeking she yet never seems to ask "why."

She approaches both the question of prostitution and homo-sexuality with commendable frankness although in discussing prostitution she does not consider the very important fact of poor intelligence in the prostitute. She apparently assumes that premarital relationship is a modern problem and that a woman who has had premarital relationship will of course make a poorer mother. Certainly this latter assumption cannot be so lightly accepted.

In discussing the question of homosexuality and its relation to motherhood she is apparently not familiar with the fact that the "passive" female homosexual and the "aggressive" male homosexual show no observable difference in dress, body, or secondary sexual characteristics nor does she consider the large number of people who are hetero-sexual at one period of their lives, homo-sexual at another, nor those who, though essentially homo-sexual, may marry, have children, and lead an exemplary (though almost unfailingly psychologically unsuccessful) heterosexual existence. In her discussion of the life of the Greeks she assumes that athletics caused the Greek homosexuality (and that it is still so doing in our colleges). Unless athletics can be traced to the very first years of life or unless "sex" as she sees it can be said to begin at college entrance then there is indeed an "exquisite paradox"—to use her expression.

The decay of family religious services, smaller families, the reduction of father and grandfather from the central situation on the platform to a place on the floor, the independence of the wife ("she can divorce him for mere infidelity"), the growing knowledge of birth control, these, alas, are all causes of family decay—all enemies of motherhood. But other factors of importance are "the sadism of spinster nurses" (which is one of the great difficulties in childbearing), and the indifference of parliament to the welfare of mothers in the passing of the "summer time act" (because late hours make British children peevish). And she ends with a cry for the good old days for, says she "Lavatory attendants, sewage workers, warders in lunatic asylums, the ciphers who wait on great machines, those who sit on high stoods for twenty-five or fifty-five years are all generally quite happy."

⁂

In great contrast to Mrs. Haldane's book is "The Making of the Family" by Mary Burt Messer. It is history insofar as it is possible to reconstruct evidence from the remote past. Opinion—where it is stated—is so reasonably and modestly stated as to make it acceptable even to the most negatively inclined. In speaking of woman in the homadic tribes and in early history she says, "Woman is to be saluted thus at the onset as a somewhat heroic figure, the creative genius of the very home which is to close in on her in due time and take her captive."

The chapter on the Rise of Marriage is especially well done. She discusses with great skill the beginnings of marriage systems and taboos, the development of exoginous marriage and the economic and social status of man in the groups controlled by women. And in reading this book one wonders again (as in reading Malinowski) whether society may not have moved in the wrong direction, whether it is not possible that greater health and freedom for both the group and the individual, male as well as female, could have been made to result from a matrilineal rather than a patrilineal group form.

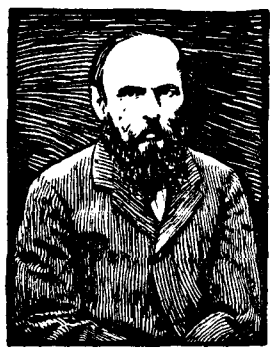
She discusses with skill the effect of the domestication of animals on the social system. It had never occurred to this reviewer what a profound effect this may have had on the social status of man and consequently on woman—who does seem to have been domesticated along with the older animals, by circumstances if not by man. In contrast with Mrs. Haldane she calls uncritical fidelity "the slave virtue" and she paints an interesting picture of the "negative ethics" under the drive of which women are brought up.

⁂

One is impressed, almost oppressed, with the long life and virility of the folkways, as she pictures them, and begins to suspect afresh the "mores," and to question in the light of the material here brought together, the validity of many of our accepted standards and values.

Miss Messer's book is a challenge to thinking and is therefore not to be put in the hands of the nervous and easily flustered believer in the silver lining, for if Mrs. Haldane's book was a cry to turn backward to the good old days, Miss Messer's can best be summarized in her own words, "Modern society is confronted by the baffling but entirely direct question, What lies ahead?"

ANOTHER addition was recently made to the Voodoo list in a novel of old New Orleans, "Toucoutou," by Edward Larocque Tinker, biographer of Lafcadio Hearn. The story, which is based on the situation made familiar by "Madame Belphine" and "'Tite Poulette," but with a special attention to the negro's own attitude to the "cockroach scrawlin' out a flour barr'l an' callin' herse'f white," has descriptions of Voodoo incantations against yellow fever, and for fidelity in love, besides glimpses of the Bamboula and the Calinda. If these have not the unmatchable glamor of Hearn's, they are even more detailed, and it was quite time that this field should again be worked.



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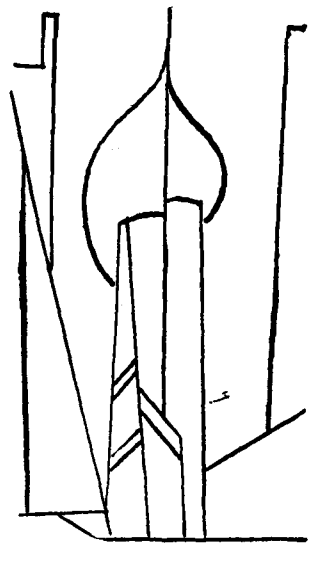

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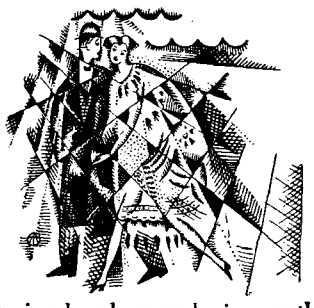

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

COLLECTING. By *Bohum Lynch*. Harpers.

ASPECTS OF DR. JOHNSON. By *E. S. Roscoe*. Cambridge University Press (Macmillan).

Biography

SIR ISAAC NEWTON, 1727-1927. Edited by F. E. BRASCH. Williams & Wilkins. 1928.

This group of papers prepared under the auspices of the History of Science Society gives the opinions of a dozen distinguished Americans on nearly every phase of Newton's life. Here is described his work in optics, astronomy, dynamics, and chemistry. Here we meet Newton as experimentalist and mathematician, as theologian and financier. A hundred years ago, the poet Keats may have proposed a toast to the confusion of Newton for destroying the rainbow by reducing it to a prism; but today, it is the verdict of his peers that Newton is still the greatest natural philosopher of all time.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON. A Brief Account of his Life and Work. By S. BRODETSKY. 1928. Luce.

Biography, history, and a simple account of Newton's scientific contributions are pleasantly combined in this readable book by a professor of mathematics at the University of Leeds. The great discoveries of the calculus, universal gravitation, the spectrum, and the true nature of color—all made, in germ at least, before Newton was thirty—are considered in their chronological position in the discoverer's life and each is prefaced by a concise history of the problem before his time. The author's pretensions are modest, but his clear expositions and his sense of what may interest the layman make the book an excellent introduction to the subject for both the student and the general reader.

CONCISE DICTIONARY OF IRISH BIOGRAPHY. By *John S. Crone*. Longmans. $3.50.

CARTER HENRY HARRISON I. By *Claudius O. Johnson*. University of Chicago Press. $3.

DOSTOEVSKY. By *J. Meier-Graefe*. Harcourt, Brace. $6.

LONG LANCE. By *Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance*. Cosmopolitan. $2.50.

ALEXANDER. By *Konrad Bercovici*. Cosmopolitan. $2.50.

Drama

OSCAR WILDE. By LESTER COHEN. Boni & Liveright. 1928. $2.

Recalling the generally admitted power of Lester Cohen's novels he should, we suppose, be promptly forgiven for the maladroit exhibition of this piece of dramatastry. Not in a long while, however, have we read any piece of work with so little excuse for existence.

Oscar Wilde's cheap, epicene, derivative epigrimacings were bad enough in his own plays. Those sentimental Victorian concoctions, in which the action was held up for interminable interruptions while the characters stood around and mouthed at each other, like *pezzi d' insieme* in an opera, how ludicrous our erstwhile enthusiasm for them does seem now. And Mr. Cohen does not seem to have caught on.

He has obviously read, but not carefully enough, Frank Harris's biography. He has taken no pains whatsoever to familiarize himself with English customs or conditions. He does not know that Englishmen do not address each other as "Say!" He has a magistrate presiding at the Central Criminal Court.

And with it all his Wilde is simply a ventriloquist's dummy automatically repeating a selection of quotations crudely interspersed with speeches invented by Mr. Cohen. He explains that the quotations were interpolated at the insistence of the manager who was about to produce the play.

PROFESSOR BERNHARDI. By *Arthur Schnitzler*. Simon & Schuster. $1.50.

ACTING. By *Allen Crafton* and *Jessica Royes*. Crofts. $2.25.

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH PLAYS. Edited by *B. Roland Lewis*. Boston: Luce.

TYPES OF PHILOSOPHIC DRAMA. Edited by *Robert Metcalf Smith*. Prentice-Hall. $2.65.

TYPES OF WORLD TRAGEDY. Edited by *Robert Metcalf Smith*. Prentice-Hall. $1.65.

THE EMPEROR JONES: THE STRAW. Bq *Eugene O'Neill*. Modern Library. 95 cents net.

FOUR ONE-ACT PLAYS. By *St. John G. Ervine*. Macmillan. $1.50.

Fiction

HANK MILLER. By M. HERBERT WOLF. Greenberg. 1928. $2.50.

With absolute fidelity to the characterization of Henry Mueller, Mr. Wolf's novel records the evolution of an average human being. From the Cleveland carpenter shop of youth, through the turbulent years in Chicago and World War France, and back once more to Cleveland, the author carries his groping, gesticulating German-American. Everywhere, even in the manhood period when expediency changes Mueller to Miller, there is a complete portrayal of futility and insignificance. The strength of the book lies in its consistent presentation of detail; its weakness in the disorder of this mass of observation.

In the sense that the author's point of view never wavers and the atmosphere is entirely appropriate, "Hank Miller" is a finely created portrait; it is stark realism of the better sort that just misses morbidity and does not compel the reader to pity. But the novel is uninteresting. Nowhere is the slightest attempt made to order or analyze the material, and the story piles up incident upon incident with such lack of unification that at the end the reader is left without a clue to the identity of the real Henry Mueller. The episodes of his career fail to blend into definite traits, and personality fails to emerge from action. Obviously, this is as the author intended: intense disorganization, the raw materials of a typically insignificant American life.

THE SUN HAWK. By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS. Appleton. 1928. $2.

Even as some of his worst writing is contained in his novels of American society, some of Robert W. Chambers's best work has been in the realm of the historical novel. Evidence of his assiduity as an author shows in the fact that he now has about sixty-five books to his credit. He is a gifted secondary romancer. In "The Drums of Aulone" he dealt with the France of Louis XIVth, the England of King James, and the New World. "The Sun Hawk" concerns Count Frontenac in New France. This is a lively and vivid narrative; the solid research the novelist has performed enriches it, the poet in him makes it glow with romance. He does not paint the court life of the time mincingly, but as it was, sensual, braggart, often insensate. The young Stanhope who is the supposed narrator in the first person, and really the main hero, is a loyal and likable natural son of Prince Rupert. The Countess Palladine is a charming, wild sprite in her girlhood and no less charming grown to maturity. Frontenac himself, that wild lion, is made a fine boy's hero of romance. The style of Chambers is nervous and rapid, the story bristles with action. Taken altogether "The Sun Hawk" is by no means to be despised. It is a rattling tale. It stands up with such work by Rafael Sabatini. What plot there is, is of course as old as the hills—through deeds of derring-do to the fair lady. But Chambers has given one a good idea of poetic color of the time despite all that Robert Louis Stevenson once referred to as "tushery." Young people who like their history compounded with a glamorous love-story will especially fancy this novel.

THE HOLIDAY. By L. LENANTON. Appleton. 1928. $2.

A book that is what it is, and admits it, is a menace to no one. The possible reader, knowing he likes the type, is free to read it or knowing he dislikes the type, is happily warned away. It is the Venus Fly Traps of literature which are so irritating; the utterly commonplace novels lurking behind sensational titles and the sophomoric autobiographical tales jacketed forth as the last word in sophistication. This latest novel by Mrs. Lenanton calls itself a holiday, and it is a holiday. It explains on the jacket that it is a pleasant novel about pleasant people, and it is a pleasant novel about pleasant people. When one further adds that the pleasant people are English, that the holiday is spent in a country-house temporarily chatelained by an attractive young woman acting as foster-mother to two amusing little boys, that there are two lovers in the offing and, that obstacles interfere with the course of the story only to throw it into better channels, there is little left to say save that Mrs. Lenanton's style is bright and conversational.

OLD ADAM'S LIKENESS. By LUCY POATE STEBBINS. Houghton Mifflin. 1928. $2.

We believe that this is Mrs. Stebbins's first novel. No record is available of any other, and, furthermore, this one shows the uncertainty of a beginner's work. Although it is essentially a story of rural life, the events do not develop in logical relation to the carefully drawn background of farm life in the Alleghany foothills in northern New York. The characters are for the most part familiar country types, but only seldom do their problems seem really of the soil. The worst trouble with the novel, however, is that it is signally unfocused and disjointed. We do not think that Mrs. Stebbins wrote it with any dominating purpose in mind; we doubt whether she knew exactly where her novel was coming out. As a result she has done a spineless, unconvincing piece of work; a novel with no central idea, no outstanding character, no particular mood or attitude. These fundamental fumblings are more definite, more impressive to the reader than the fact that Mrs. Stebbins does well enough with the chapters that deal with Stephen's silly marriage to the pitiful Letty and with those that tell of Prim's unmaidenly sallying forth after Tom Peebles.

LIGHT IN THE WINDOW. By JOHN P. FORT. Dodd, Mead. 1928. $2.

This is the tale of a youth who, like the ragged child on Christmas Eve, saw merely the lighted windows of life, he himself being temperamentally unable to share the gaiety within. Why was he unable? Merely because he was what any ordinary person would call a sentimental fool. He met first Ruth, then Marjorie, and then Alice; each disappointed him, shattered his fantastic ideals, left him shaking like a leaf in the tempest. Mr. Fort goes to great length to explain this simpleton to us; he does, to a certain extent, explain him, but he does not create sympathy for him. Some neurotics please us, interest us, arouse our intense compassion (such was Nina in "Strange Interlude"), but Mr. Fort presents a neurotic so weak, so childish, as merely to annoy us.

DAUGHTERS OF INDIA. By MARGARET WILSON. Harpers. 1928. $2.

We shall soon be reduced to hearing from the uncles and aunts of India. First came "Mother India" with its sensational contents and career as a best seller, then "A Son of Mother India" replied, but was very little harkened to, and lately "Father India" has been published but seems to have evoked small interest. All these books aim at the enlightenment of the reader; "Daughters of India" is frankly meant to entertain.

Margaret Wilson spent several years in India as a teacher where she must have gathered the "local color" which forms so rich a background for her latest novel. There is no denying that the book is amusing, that once started it will hardly be laid aside until it is finished, but for all that it remains unsatisfactory. The parts never quite fuse into a whole. Davida, the young American missionary who is the central figure in the story, has a way of disappearing from under the readers very eyes. One side of her character, the more external, the side that is amused at the world and at herself is very completely given; but that other dark side, glimpsed in her feeling for the sun-crazed young missionary who never actually appears in the story, which must have existed to make even a Davida turn "missioner," this side Miss Latimer has neither made plain nor sufficiently suggested. One personality does stand out as alive. Miss Bhose, the corpulent Brahmin virgin, kindles the book to warmth whenever she appears. One cannot help wishing that she instead of Davida had been granted the center of the stage.

While Miss Latimer's tone is light throughout and while she indulges in such aids to fiction as kidnappings and long trial scenes there is underneath, though apparent enough, the author's running commentary on many of the conditions that the public found so shocking (yet endearing) in Miss Mayo's book. "Daughters of India" will not add to Margaret Wilson's prestige as a novelist, but may be accepted as a slight divertissment between more serious works.

THE LIGHT SHINES THROUGH. By *Octavus Roy Cohen*. Little, Brown. $2.

(*Continued on next page*)

First Announcement

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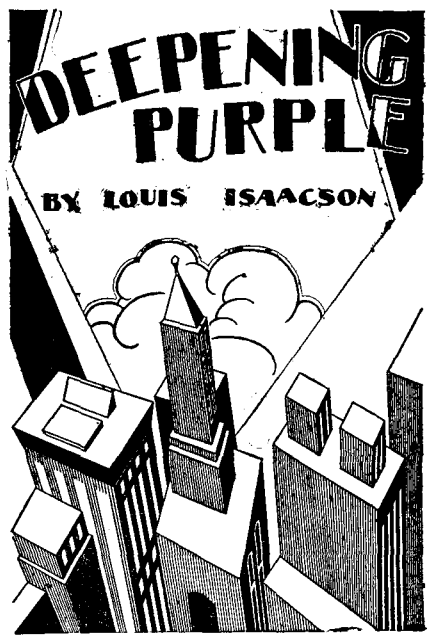

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The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

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TWOPENCE COLORED. By *Patrick Hamilton.* Little, Brown. $2.50 net.
PHOENIX. By *Alan Sims.* Little, Brown. $2.50 net.
VANITY UNDER THE SUN. By *Dale Collins.* Little, Brown. $2 net.
BORROWED REPUTATIONS. By *J. Wesley Putnam.* Macaulay. $2.
TRIGGER JUSTICE. By *Clem Yore.* Macaulay. $2.
CINDY. By *Rose Wilder Lane.* Harpers. $2.
THE SEA MYSTERY. By *Freeman Wills Crofts.* Harpers. $2.
ALL ABOARD. By *Irvin S. Cobb.* Cosmopolitan. $2.
PHILLIDA. By *H. S. Reid.* Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.
THE RING FENCE. By *Eden Phillpotts.* Macmillan. $2.
NETTLE HARVEST. By *Sylvia Denys Hooke.* Doubleday, Doran. $2 net.
THE MISSING PARTNERS. By *Henry Wade.* Payson & Clarke. $2.
LEW TYLER AND THE LADIES. By *Wallace Irwin.* Doubleday, Doran. $2 net.
MESQUITE JENKINS. By *Clarence E. Mulford.* Doubleday, Doran. $2 net.
THE FOOLISH VIRGIN. By *Kathleen Norris.* Doubleday, Doran. $2.
DIVERSEY. By *MacKinlay Kantor.* Coward-McCann. $2.
THE RUNAWAYS. By *George A. Birmingham.* Bobbs-Merrill. $2.
COWBOY. By *Ross Santee.* Cosmopolitan. $2.50.
THE QUARTZ EYE. By *Henry Kitchell Webster.* Bobbs-Merrill. $2.

(*Continued on page 47*)

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Foreign Literature

Dominica Sings to Herself

DEL FOLK-LORE MUSICAL DOMINICANA. TOMO I. By JULIO ARZENO. Santo Domingo: Imp. La Cuna de America. 1927.

Reviewed by MUNA LEE
University of Porto Rico

A STUDY of the popular songs of Latin America would richly repay sociologist and historian. In her folk-utterance we have Latin America talking in her sleep. Freed from inhibition, released from restraint whether external or self-imposed, she declares herself with passionate emphasis, and even the overstress of her exaggerations has its core in actuality. The anonymous folk-poets of the southern republic face their world and deal with it vigorously and directly; not fleeing from themselves—as the lettered poets of Latin America have always been too prone to do—into Spanish castles and Inca palaces, along garden-avenues of Versailles or on dizzy Dadaistic whirligigs. He is a shrewd, discriminating, very realistic observer, this anonymous poet of the pueblo, with something definite to say; as definite as a dragon-fly or a wasp.

One approach, therefore, to the collective soul of Santo Domingo, the Caribbean island best beloved of Columbus, is by way of her folk-songs; and the approach is considerably facilitated by this volume compiled by Sr. Julio Arzeno and just published in San Domingo City. Words and music are given, with comment by the author, who engagingly explains his book as a patriotic effort to interest Dominicans in their own musical background in contradistinction to "foreign patterns." Whether or not they will serve the purpose intended by the author—and his selections show quite as much Spanish inheritance and French influence through Haiti as indigenous inspiration—they are certainly interesting enough to justify the collection on æsthetic as well as nationalistic grounds.

The rustic stringed instruments formerly used to accompany the songs, even the *tiple* so characteristic of the American tropics—"similar to a small Spanish guitar, with four groups of two or three strings each, those of each group being tuned in octaves, a duplication which facilitates the rapid picking of all the strings with all the fingers of the right hand"—have been almost entirely superseded by the accordion. The accordion, indeed, we are told, has become as ubiquitous in Santo Domingo as in Hungary, though the rude but effective stringed instruments hold their own throughout the other Antillean islands.

Among a great variety of forms and rhythms, the *merengue* is perhaps most typical as well as most popular, with subtly woven pattern of music and internal rhyme at once haunting and emphatic. Señor Arzeno makes a just and striking comparison of the folk-music of Santo Domingo with that of Porto Rico, which, though only sixty miles away, is separated from the sister island by an oceanic gulf as deep as Mount Everest is high, and by a temperamental chasm nearly as great. The Dominican pueblo readily adapts and adopts the waltz, the mazurka, the fox-trot, and the Charleston, he tells us, but never the *Danza*, the long, languorous, strangely formal dance of Porto Rico. "Our country people do not like the *danza* because it does not amalgamate with vigorous temperament," . . . . Porto Rico has always been pacific, placid, suggests Señor Arzeno, because of "her enervating and mournful music which lulls bellicose passion." But "ours, the Dominican, is a spirited rhythm warming the heart."

Humor spiced with malice, caustic political comment, irony, acute self-mockery characteristically Latin, haunting and passionate love-songs: all find place in the repertoire of the Dominican washerwoman, pounding clothes to whiteness upon the rocks of the Ozama, or of the itinerant vender of mangoes and plantains singing to himself on the long road home through canebrake and forest. One of these latter, after a day in the capital, where sailors from a dozen ships swagger through the streets in the exultant freedom of shore-leave, might well sing, "*Oh, marinó, Los marinos son del agua*—"

Oh, mariner,
The mariners are of the ocean,
Oh, mariner,
And make their living sailing,
Oh, mariner,
But I'm a country-fellow,
Oh, mariner,
I make my living working!

The woodcutter fells mahogany trees to such lusty rotundities as

Me boy,
Me boy papá,
Me boy
pa Samaná,
Me boy,
Me boy, papá,
Me boy
pa la Mantia.

Soldier-songs, dance-songs, political and patriotic songs, flash out different facets of the national temperament. In 1916 the pueblo sang:

Vinieron los americanos
a coger la fortaleza,
y mataron al capitán
de un balazo a la cabeza.

and in 1925:

Señor en Santiago
Virgilio Reyna,
pero in Peurto Plata
manda Luis Giniebra.

As always in Spanish-speaking countries, the love-songs are no less subtle than intense, with a characteristic combination of unreasoning passion and keen psychological analysis:

I never tire of looking,
Of looking down the road,
To see if the mirror is coming
In which I see myself!

Some untutored Dominican has caught the exact thought of one of the most sophisticated and charming lyrics in A. E. Housman's "Last Poems," in four lines (Housman used eight to express the same setting, the same circumstances and the identical reaction). The Dominican says,

Anoche la enamoré
Creyendo que era bonita,
y cuando me amaneció,
me salió tueyta la maldita!

which is merely the tropical transliteration of

In the blue and silver morning
On the haystack as they lay,
Oh, they looked at one another
And then they looked away!

These four-line songs are strictly Spanish in form, but others, with mournful repetitive refrains show a strong Haitian influence. Sometimes the songs take the form of a gay dialogue with one of the many nonsense refrains (often very like similar phrases in the plantation songs of the southern negroes) which probably are African survivals:

Pra-pra-pra-pra,
Tell me, girlie, where you live,
Pra-pra-pra-pra,
For I want to come to see you.
Pra-pra-pra-pra,
It may be that I some day
Pra-pra-pra-pra
Will sing mass before this altar!

A second volume, which is promised soon, will be awaited with interest by all readers of this first. As critic and historian of music, Sr. Arzeno is fallible. Often he fails to distinguish between what is Spanish under a sea-change and what is indigenous; and, among the material undeniably native to this hemisphere, some riddles, for example, which he gives as "Dominican" are "Antillean" if not South American, for they exist in easily recognizable form in Cuba and Porto Rico, if nowhere else. But as an anthologist, Sr. Arzeno is delightful; and the Spanish songs included (once they are recognized for what they are) do not detract from but add to the interest. The modifications which the original undergoes in various countries—and some of the songs given exist in one form or another in Colombia, Venezuela, and Mexico, as well as through the Spanish Antilles—are faithful and sometimes startlingly illuminating revelations of how diversely the several national temperaments shape and color the same substance.

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The Reader's Guide

CONDUCTED BY MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*. Mrs. Becker's summer headquarters will be at 2 Bramerton St., Chelsea, London.

W. E. L., Lafayette, Indiana, asks for a play to be read before a club by three of its members.

GET "Dramas by Present Day Authors," edited by R. W. Pence of De Pauw University (Scribner). This has fifteen recently presented plays of lengths varying from Morley's "Thursday Evening" to Bennett's "Milestones" and with subjects as different as "Loyalties," "Trifles," and "Merton of the Movies." They are all suited to reading-aloud in this way, and the book may be used by study-clubs as well as schools.

H. G. C., Chicago, Ill., asks for a reading-list on American political parties.

"THE word pol'tic surprises by himself," as Count Smorltork learned from Mr. Pickwick, "a difficult study of no inconsiderable magnitude. The general reader impelled, by an awakening interest in our local or national political affairs, to send to me for advice in guide-books has been directed until quite lately to one book, C. E. Merriam's "The American Party System" (Macmillan), in the hope that from this lucid introduction to the history and principles of our party organizations, nominating systems, election machinery, and the like, he might go on reading with the help of its book-lists. In 1924 came E. E. Robinson's "Evolution of American Political Parties" (Harcourt, Brace), supporting the position that a two-party system is inadequate to our present needs with much information in eminently readable form: this too has a book-list with each chapter. I am taking for granted that Bryce's "American Commonwealth" (Macmillan) is already in this inquirer's library: indeed it has been on the impulse of this and of the same author's chapters on the United States in "Modern Democracies" (Macmillan) that many of these requests have been made.

But this is a year when more people are "reading up" on the coming contest than ever before in our political history—at least writers and publishers seem to be convinced that they are, for a young library has come into being within the year for the enlightenment of voters young or old. Light is thrown from as many directions as the spot-light battery of a modern stage. "The Democratic Party," by Frank Kent (Century), cast broader beams than most of the books: they are popular histories, sufficiently unbiassed to be acceptable, moving rapidly enough through many pages to carry along even a lazy reader. Along with these statements of purpose and achievement the reader who is not lazy will take two little books, "Jeffersonian Principles" and "Hamiltonian Principles" (Little, Brown), edited and arranged by James Truslow Adams from the writings of the founders; this being a year when these principles will be passionately invoked, it may be well to know what they are. My own standby for definition of present-day principles is the part of André Siegfried's "America Comes of Age" (Harcourt, Brace) that makes it clear to his countrymen why an American votes as he does, however he may vote. This book was not intended originally for Americans, and so has none of the handicaps politeness might give such a book written by an outsider or patriotism one by a native. Written to tell Frenchmen what sort of country is this new America with whom they must from now on do business, it has the qualities for which you choose a photograph of yourself to be sent to someone who has never seen you but must by its aid pick you out on a crowded railway platform. It is astonishing how seldom we trust our favorite portraits to stand by us in a situation so practical.

"American Presidents," by James Morgan (Macmillan), is a popular collection of short biographies for schools or home libraries, but "American Presidents," by Thomas Francis Moran (Crowell, new and revised edition), though also intended for everyday reading, concentrates on the qualities displayed by our chief executives in office, and the contribution of these qualities to American progress—those who were pretty good Presidents, those who were great or had some touch of greatness, those who were definite drawbacks or disgraces. This makes the book satutary reading for a presidential year, but even more entertaining is its companion volume, "The Also Rans," by Don G. Seitz (Crowell). These are the heroes of their own time who never, for all their pains, could make the White House, with enough of their careers and qualities to make it apparent—at this distance at least—why they could not. It is an informal journalistic contribution to the study of our national characteristics as much as it is to our political history.

When I came to the last page of "Drifting Sands of Party Politics," by Oscar W. Underwood (Century), it was with the conviction that now I knew why Alabama kept casting the same votes over the loud-speaker all those hot days four years ago, and that I now wished they had held on even longer. It stands out among recent politicians' utterances that I have read, and is likely to make a good many, past and to come, look pretty thin: it stands, indeed, with books like Siegfried's.

The recently published history "Tammany Hall," by M. R. Werner (Doubleday, Doran), is frankly intended to warn rather than to comfort: the reader, prepared by Denis Lynch's "Boss Tweed: the Story of a Grim Era" (Boni & Liveright), Don G. Seitz's "The Dreadful Decade" (Bobbs-Merrill), or the history of Tammany by Gustavus Myers, will not expect comfort for the patriot. Nor will he get it in Herbert Asbury's "The Gangs of New York" (Knopf), which naturally ranges alongside. What impressed me most in this extraordinary record is the negligible part taken by women as individuals in this powerful and organized underworld. The only ones who seem really to come up over the edge of anonymity are Mother Mandelbaum and a pageful of dour attendant dowagers. Now and then Gertie the Goat or some other such zoological person will come into the game for a moment, but taking one gang with another it seems to have been a man's world where lady wildcats were not permitted to complicate matters. According to Gaboriau and Gaston Le Roux, they manage these things differently in France for the films.

"W. R. Hearst: an American Phenomenon," by John K. Winkler (Simon & Schuster), and "Bryan: the Great Commoner," by J. C. Long (Appleton), are biographies by no means to be confounded with campaign documents such as we will be getting this year. Mr. Winkler's book is a picturesque exposition of the powers and limitations of money in American politics; Mr. Long's in the main a like setting-out of the limitations and powers of self-confidence. I do not know if either book was actually written with this aim in view, but that is the effect each has had upon this reader. They are full-length portraits of the type of subject sketched in Mr. Seitz's "Also Rans." Meade Minnegerode's "Presidential Years, 1787-1860" (Putnam), describes how campaigns have been conducted, brass bands, torchlights, songs, dark horses, all the ballyhoo up to the time of the Civil War.

Since last I printed a list of American novels of politics—I remember it closed with "God Got One Vote," by Frederick Hazlittle Brennan (Simon & Schuster)—we have had Brand Whitlock's "Big Matt" (Appleton), a broad canvas full of figures such as appear in our contemporary political life.

H. H. R., New York City, asks for books about the 'nineties.

THEY began a good while back, with Holbrook Jackson's brilliant reminiscences and various reports of literary trends. Then the period was reached in the course of our "decade" researches, such as began with Meade Minnegerode's "The Fabulous Forties," and we were given a precious and deftly allusive account of "The Mauve Decade" by Thomas Beer (Knopf), and the first of those invaluable historical grab-bags, "Our Times," by Mark Sullivan (Scribner)—whose two volumes so far published are supposed by their sub-titles to deal with the turn of the century and the year or so after the curve was rounded, but that really begin much further back—as they must—and bring the nineties in America into the proper relation with what went before and came after. Una Hunt, author of the delightful "Una May," told us in a half-novel, half-history, what it was like to be "Young in the 'Nineties" (Scribner). R. V. Culter convinced a later generation, in his "The Gay 'Nineties: an Album of Reminiscent Drawings" (Doubleday, Doran), that whatever life may have been in that distant day, people certainly must have had a good time. Oh they did; why they did, looking over the scenery in and out of doors in these pictures of "Rainy Daisies," Turkish cosy corners, tandem bikes, family dinners, and the like, it may be difficult for contemporary youth to determine. But look at their faces, I ask you; look at these broad and convincing grins; happy they were; I who was young myself when sleeves were interlined with fibre-chamois can assure you that they were.

"In the Golden 'Nineties," by Henry Collins Brown (Valentine's Manuals), and the other volumes in this series—such as "The Elegant Eighties"—deal with aspects of life in New York City among the prosperous. But it seems a stiff sort of life compared with what was going on across the ocean, according to Richard Le Gallienne, in "The Romantic 'Nineties" (Doubleday, Page), or in Anthony Hope's "Memories and Notes" (Doubleday, Doran), or Shaw Desmond's "London Nights in the Gay 'Nineties" (McBride), the two latter having but just appeared in the United States. What a life that must have been that these not-yet-too elderly gentlemen almost lyrically regret! For that matter, there are still vestigial remains of it in London somewhere; it is not swept clean away as everything is swept from the surface of New York by everything next. I have been hunting those very music-halls Mr. Desmond mourns, in lost corners of London, making pilgrimages to entertainments on whose programs any of the older generation appear. Why, even at the Holborn Empire not two weeks since I was entranced by an old party in a bathrobe croaking a Rabelaisian ballad as British as porkpie.

Frank Rutter, in "Since I Was Twenty-five" (Houghton Mifflin), praises these lost singers, but the feature of his book is the

(*Continued on next page*)

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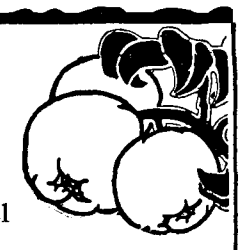

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artist life—the memories of the first days of the Picasso excitement, of Rodin, of the Paris studios. The new life and critique, "Aubrey Beardsley," by Haldane MacFall (Simon & Schuster), is another important light on this period; the book is made the more valuable by an unusual number of Beardsley illustrations. "The Life of Oscar Wilde," by Robert H. Sherard (Dodd, Mead), was lately reviewed at length by Mr. MacFall for this journal. "The Life and Genius of T. W. H. Crosland," by W. Sorley Brown, lately published in London, tells of the relations of this "last Bohemian of London" with Swinburne, Shaw, Lucas, Wilde, Kipling, Sabatini, Henley, Harris, and countless others, and with small folk just as picturesque. I rather distrust that "last of the Bohemians"; someone is forever being buried under that title: only this Spring the papers had great headlines when "The Last London Bohemian" left the Savage club for the cemetery, and for days his vast white beard figured in news-photographs. "The Last Bohemia," by Francis Carco (Holt), is located in the country across the Channel; it is of a later time than these other books, and makes one who comes to his French authors slowly and by way of translations feel that he must have grown to be Methuselah without knowing it. For Carco writes about MacOrlan, Marie Laurencin, Pierre Benoit, Dorgelès, writers that some of us think it quite knowing to know, as if they were visible only through the mist of distance. Oh well, that's what they say about Montmartre itself in Paris, those who knew it before the War.

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"Examples of Lettering and Design," by J. Littlejohns, has been published by Isaac Pitman & Sons. It is a simple treatise on pen lettering, with examples of roman, italic, and script letters. Most of the examples given are of good letter forms; the black-letter alphabet is noticeably bad. Owing to its conciseness, the book can be recommended to beginners with more confidence than the more elaborate treatises.

The April issue of *Philobiblon*, issued by Herbert Reichner, Vienna, is a good example of modern German printing, with a great deal more attention to typographic style than our own magazines will allow. The numerous notes on American printing show a considerable knowledge of the details of our typographic life—it almost makes one nervous! R.

The Bibliographical Society of America has recently brought out through the University of Chicago Press volume 20, parts 1 and 2, of its "Papers." The most important contribution is Mr. Lucius L. Hubbard's study of "Text Changes in the Taylor editions of 'Robinson Crusoe' with remarks on the Cox edition," an exceedingly careful, authoritative piece of work, especially valuable on account of the scholarly collations that have been included. Mr. Hubbard has long been recognized as the great American authority on "Robinson Crusoe."

The other papers include a short, very personal account of the late William Beer, by Edward Larocque Tinker, followed by a bibliography of Beer compiled by Miss Florence S. Hellman of the Library of Congress; "Early Native Engravers of Hawaii" and "An Unacknowledged Work of Arthur Machen?" by Nathan van Patten; and two reviews by Miss Margaret B. Stillwell, Librarian of the Annmary Brown Memorial, Providence, and Miss Jane E. Cooke, respectively, of the "Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke," and Arthur G. Kennedy's Bibliography of Writings on the English Language."

Of the recent dealers' catalogue, two especially deserve attention, the Maggs number 505. "English Literature and Printing from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century," part 2 (M-Z), and the Birrell and Garnett number 18. "Books of the Romantic Era."

The Maggs catalogue, commencing with a fine copy in the original calf of the first issue of Mandeville's "Fable of the Bees," London, 1714, at £26, continues through several of Gervase Markham's books on horsemanship and farming; ten of Massinger's plays; Sir Thomas More; Otway, Alexander Pope; Prior, Shirley; Suckling; Swift (at most reasonable prices); James Thomson; and Horace Walpole; with particularly interesting sections on "Poems and Ballads" and Shakespeare and Shakesperiana in general. These catalogues are consistently interesting, not only because of their elaboration, but because of the unusually fine copies that are described. The prices are not excessive.

The Birrell and Garnett catalogue, covering the earlier part of the nineteenth century, brings to the close the series of period catalogues this firm has been issuing. As one might expect, the authors represented include all the most familiar names, together with a few American writers, Joel Barlow, Hawthorne, and Longefellow. The Byron, DeQuincey, and Sir Walter Scott sections are remarkably full and interesting, while the prices asked are never more than the volumes are worth.

T.

The Nonsuch Van-Brugh

THE business of providing standard editions of works of merit is not always handled as well as might be. There is, I suspect, a temptation to let the author's name and reputation be a cloak for indifferent composition and presswork. For instance, I tried the other day to find a copy of "The Tale of Two Cities" which would be worth buying for the comeliness of its manufacture. There may be such, but I did not find any. Most of the editions offered me were printed from scandalously worn electrotype plates, or were otherwise mean and spiritless things. To put imagination into the producing of such permanent books, even to do them in good workmanlike fashion, seems not worth the while.

It is, therefore, with real enthusiasm that one welcomes the Nonsuch Press editions of Restoration authors. The one at hand, The Complete Works of Sir John Vanbrugh, comprising the Plays, edited by Bonamy Dobree, and the Letters, edited by Geoffrey Webb, is good enough for any library shelf, and not too good for any. It is set in Caslon Old Face type, with some of the characteristic Nonsuch decoration on title-page and running-head, and printed in four wieldy quarto volumes, bound in cloth and paper, with paper label. Of the "trade" edition thirteen hundred copies have been printed and of the handmade paper edition one hundred and ten. Thirteen or fourteen hundred copies permit of a reasonable selling price—$25 for the common paper edition—and the set establishes a standard in format which is encouraging.

Soldier, dramatist, architect—Van-Brugh, if not of first quality, helps to prove the thesis that every gentleman ought to be able to write, build, and fight. If he laid many a heavy burden on earth, as the well-known verse suggests, those who were fortunate enough to see the Yale fraternity production of "The Relapse" some years ago will agree with Professor Perry that "there can be no doubt of Lord Foppington's title to preëminence among all the beaux of English comedy." If "Brother Van" as he was affectionately called labored rather heavily in his other plays and in his building at Blenheim and Castle Howard, he was a diligent and likable man, and it is good to welcome his "works" in this mellow and satisfactory Nonsuch edition. R.

Errata

IN the review of Mr. Garnett's "Documentary Account of the Laboratory Press," printed in the issue for July 21, besides a wrong slug in one place, there appeared a typographic error in the third line from the end made me speak of printing as a "comedy craft" when what I wrote was "comely craft." Apologies are hereby tendered to Mr. Garnett and to the readers of this *Review*.

GARY EARL HEATH
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Publishers . 37 West 57th Street . *New York*

For almost five years *The Inner Sanctum* has been hoping and praying for a fiction best-seller to match BURANELLI, DURANT and TRADER HORN.

And now, to pile thrill upon unpredictability, . . . while puzzles are staging a revival, while *The Story of Philosophy* marches staunchly in its third hundred thousand, and while the spell of ALFRED ALOYSIUS continues unbroken, . . . lo and behold, believe it or not, along come *two* novels from *The Inner Sanctum* that are throwing the literati into a lather and the bookstores into a stampede.

There are probably no two books in all recorded history more dissimilar than *Bambi, A Life in the Woods by* FELIX SALTEN *and Show Girl* by J. P. MCEVOY, yet in one respect they are boon companions—their best-seller performance.

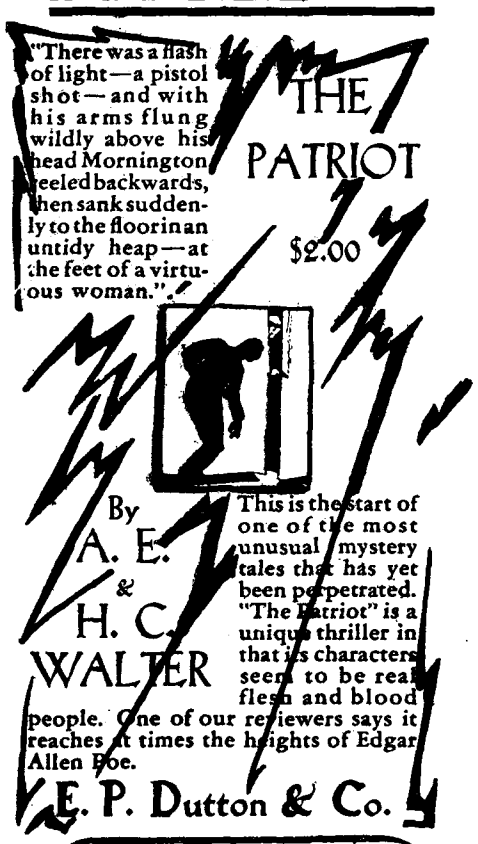
Bambi started off with a first printing of 75,000 copies. *Show Girl* with 3,000 copies, but last week they went nip and tuck on the daily order sheet.

Bambi	
Monday	1102 copies
Tuesday	1497 copies
Wednesday	100 copies
Thursday	628 copies
Friday	175 copies
Show Girl	
Monday	564 copies
Tuesday	556 copies
Wednesday	1709 copies
Thursday	278 copies
Friday	1581 copies

Among the week's callers at *The Inner Sanctum* were GEORGE GERSHWIN, WILL DURANT, WALTER WINCHELL, LAURENCE STALLINGS and J. P. MCEVOY; all of them seemed delighted with the state of the republic, especially its taste in books. One advertising writer who is an ardent admirer of both SALTEN and MCEVOY came tearing into *The Inner Sanctum* with a composite layout for both books, headed *Making Whoopee in the Woods.*

—ESSANDESS.

"There was a flash of light—a pistol shot—and with his arms flung wildly above his head Mornington reeled backwards, then sank suddenly to the floor in an untidy heap—at the feet of a virtuous woman."



By A. E. & H. C. WALTER

This is the start of one of the most unusual mystery tales that has yet been perpetrated. "The Patriot" is a unique thriller in that its characters seem to be real flesh and blood people. One of our reviewers says it reaches at times the heights of Edgar Allen Poe.

E. P. Dutton & Co.

Arnold Bennett says:

"He has genuine originality of outlook and invention and his pen is refreshed by new inspiration."

London Evening Standard

THE ISLAND OF CAPTAIN SPARROW

By the Author of "Deluge"

S. Fowler Wright

$2.00

Cosmopolitan Book Corporation

O'REILLEY, the intermittent mouse, has been heard from again. And of all places from Russia. He has picked up some independence, and a great array of consonants, and numberless odds and ends of information along with the grains of caviar that have sustained him during his travels. As you doubtless remember O'Reilley is an intellectual mouse. Having been brought up on the *Literary Digest* and the *Police Gazette* and the *Saturday Review,* and having of late months fairly gorged himself on detective stories (the absolute mark of the literary aristocrat), he is in a position to speak with authority of books in Russia. Of course we're a little sceptical still of the completeness of his digestion of some of the Russian works he claims to be swallowing unadulterated, but we're immensely interested in what he writes us of Russian taste in regard to American literature. It didn't surprise us to hear from him that *Jack London* was a favorite in the Soviet Republic, for that's the stuff which every traveller to Russia has been reporting just to show how completely he has penetrated into the mind and temper of the nation, but it did rather take our breath away to find that London's works have been published in an edition of 1,300,000. "Some guys, these Russians," O'Reilley comments, sliding back into the vernacular he picked up in the days when he used to make a precarious living in the desk drawers of the city room of an evening newspaper. "Red-blooded, I'll say, revelling in a fellow like London, and eating up *James O. Curwood.*" "Sophisticates, also," he adds, remembering his dignity and his vocabulary. "They actually read *Ben Hecht* and *Floyd Dell* and *John Dos Passos,* and *Maxwell Bodenheim,* and *Waldo Frank.* Oh, yes, and they like *Sherwood Anderson* and *Dreiser* (though why they should have to go to America for naturalism when their own literature is full of it is more than the intelligence of a poor mouse can discover), and they read thousands of copies of *Sinclair Lewis* and about 485,000 copies of *Upton Sinclair.*" . . .

O'Reilley is great on statistics; he's sent us four typewritten sheets (foolscap size), written in purple ink on paper evidently filched from a newspaper, enumerating the tastes of the Russians. We had meant at first to give you his list here complete, but then it struck us that in this hot weather with Mr. Canby taking it easy in a châlet in Connecticut it might be wise to save some of his figures as a basis for an editorial. No sooner had we come to that conclusion than we realized that the proper place for his communication was in the center of the paper where we could have spread it out nicely with the authors' names on one side, the titles next to them, and the size of the editions in a neat row on the other side. Well, here's what's come of it. We've played both ends against the middle and as a result you haven't got any real picture of the Russian mujiks going to the fields with Curwood volumes under their arms, or of the Communist schoolboys poring over *Lester Cohen's* "Sweeping." Russians, by the way, seem to read *Octavus Roy Cohen* as well as Lester, for O'Reilley lists him on his foolscap, though he doesn't seem to know just how many of them like "Assorted Chocolate." He's written the title down with blanks for the size of the edition. Be that as it may O'Reilley likes it; we know it, for we've found ours gone in the morning when we had left it all nicely wrapped up in Mirror silver paper in our desk when we went home in the evening. . . .

Speaking of O'Reilley and Russia reminds us that "The Diary of a Communist Schoolboy," which Payson and Clarke brought out recently, is written by an author hitherto unknown in this country who has sold his enormous quantities in the Soviet State. And his name isn't Ognyov either though that's the one he uses. No, we don't know the real one. . . .

We wish to make our salutations, and in his absence the salutations of the Phoenician, to the new firm of Coward, McCann which this week enters upon what we hope will be a long and prosperous existence. We knew Mr. Coward in the days when he was a rising young man with Bobbs-Merrill, and we've always thought he was cut out to be a successful publisher. The best of good luck to him and his associates. . . .

Our sonneteers are so ardent in pursuit of ferocity that we find we still have a number of verses we haven't presented to you. Here is a sonnet by the well-known poet, *Kenneth Slade Alling*:

DARKNESS

Out of an unhorizoned sea we came:
Out of the body of the dark we rose;
Its veins of fire and arteries of flame
Surrounded us and fed our long repose.
What æon-long gestation for this brief
Uncertain, mad maturity we have;
And in that mighty parent is no grief
That she our mother should become our grave.

Forever we are being born, we flow
Out of this cruelly fertile womb of hers.
What flame has trafficked with the darkness so
That this the spawning of mankind occurs—
What eyes perceived, that burning hour, those barterers
Of some accursed delight, to be man's charterers?

We don't know whether or no *J. W. Whaler* is the *James Whaler* who wrote that most promising recent book of poems, "Hale's Pond"; anyway, over a year ago he sent us the following from Wilmington, Delaware:

THE LAST DAY

I hear the last year's autumn heavily hum
Under the feet against the teeth of the dead;
The last tree rolls to lips of frozen lead;
The last flower crumbles low to dust and scum,
Which once was life and faith and Christendom;
The last child cries for suck; from the last bed
Laments the last deflowered maidenhead,
And the last lover's heart's delirium.

So be my tomb a leaf's black skeleton
Blown deep into a cave; my epitaph
Uncipherable as air, as storm-blown chaff;
And let my hearse be curses of cold rain—
Oh, let it leach to nothingness this brain,
Clotting my blood upon oblivion.

Come, come, you will say, that's altogether too dreary! Well, then here's a lighter protest, more of everyday. *Mrs. David F. Swenson* (*Lillian M. Swenson*), of Minneapolis, did us the honor last year of making the ferocious sonnet an exercise at a meeting of her literary club. She sent us the ladies' various contributions, none of which seemed to us as good as her own, given herewith:

THE HAVE YOU'S

Ten thousand execrations on the breed
Of "Have you's" who infest my castle door—
Glad-handers, with an air, "We've met before—
Have you within your soul an unfilled need?"
"Have you a vacuum cleaner in your house?
If so, what make, and what the price you paid?"
"Have you false teeth you'd like to have remade?"
"Have you provided puss with catnip mouse?"

"Have you bought hosiery in our endless chain?"
"Have you tried Stingit's cold cream for the face?"
"Have you a Magazine of Brawn and Brain?"
"Have you selected your last resting-place?"
Lord, in the heavenly mansions, I implore
"No Agents" signs may decorate each door!
. . .

We were just going to tell you about a most delightful invitation we've had to spend a week-end drinking the breezes in a houseboat at Easthampton when the printer's boy broke in upon us and reminded us we were late with our last line of copy. Well, the devil is taking the hindmost. Vale.

THE SUBSTITUTE PHOENICIAN.

this year essays are smart . . .

IN 1718, a new discourse from the mellow pen of Mr. Addison, the latest witty screed of Mr. Steele, was the talk of all the coffee-houses and the fashionable dinner tables of London. Later the essay lost its *cachet*—wit gave way to weight, pleasure to pedantry. But 1928 finds the essay restored as a delight. Ten years after Christopher Morley wrote his first essays, the essay is smart again. And Christopher Morley's essays are not merely smart—they are brilliant.

★

"HE *has kept me reading his confounded volumes for four days on end . . . which I avow I have not done for any author for the last twenty years.*"—FORD MADOX FORD, *in* BOOKS (*N. Y. Herald-Tribune*)

★

"*A book for desert-island company, for the automobile camping tourist, for the back yard at home; and to be kept on the center table, if any, or upon the closest shelf for all-year-round companionship.*"—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*

★

"*The intelligent and convincing enthusiasm of a man who found that journalism neither stifled nor perverted his interest in life.*"—EDWARD CUSHING, *in the Brooklyn Eagle*

★

"*A man who can transvaluate the world into symbols and images of his own choosing is beyond price. In Morley's* ESSAYS *are 1,100 pages of a new world.*"—*Jacksonville Times-Union*

★

"*An unexpectedness that is a constant joy. The book will be read and reread by those fortunate enough to possess it.*"—*Toronto Saturday Night*

★

"*Likely to furnish pleasure for a much longer period than the slender previous volumes which always were finished much too soon. . . . The sort of things one stops to read aloud to the family.*"—*Chicago Evening Post*

In this one volume, the cream of all of Morley's Essays, from his previous six books, are issued in permanent form, along with many new discourses which have not hitherto appeared in book form. ESSAYS is beautifully made, a book to prize as a permanent possession. A volume of 1106 pages, on thin opaque paper, designed by Stanley Morison, contains a hundred and thirty-nine essays. The price is $3.50, at all bookstores.

ESSAYS
by
Christopher Morley

DOUBLEDAY DORAN

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The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 39. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best short lyric imitating the mood and manner of Mr. A. E. Housman. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, New York, not later than the morning of August 13.)

Competition No. 40. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the coolest Song for a Very Hot Day. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of August 27.)

The New Books

Juvenile

(*Continued from page* 42)

THE CROSS-STITCH HEART AND OTHER PLAYS. By RACHEL FIELD. Scribners. 1928. $1.25.

This is a collection of five little plays including besides the title-play "Greasy Luck," "The Nine Days' Queen," "The Londonderry Air," "At the Junction," and "Bargains in Cathay."

The first is a fantasy about a sampler, in prose and verse, with some music composed by Miss Clare Kummer. The idea of the characters in a mid-Victorian sampler coming to life is a good one, but unfortunately the play is not as good as the idea. The author is modern enough to believe that every aspect of life in the 'sixties is **extremely funny to this generation, but as this is a common attitude, possibly it is a true one. At any rate it is more forgivable than her sentimentality.**

Of the others "Greasy Luck" is the best. It is a realistic love story of whaling days on the island of Nantucket, written with simplicity and naturalness, if not with more than a rather conventional gift for characterization.

"The Nine Days' Queen" is a more ambitious effort in blank verse, telling of Lady Jane Grey on the night before her execution. The author is not, one fears, a great poet, for her blank verse is bare and pedestrian, nor has she an acute sensitiveness in the choice of words. On the other hand, the play would make an effective stage picture, and the same may be said for all the others in this volume.

THREE YOUNG CROWS AND OTHER BIRD STORIES. By ERNEST HAROLD BAYNES. Macmillan. 1927. $1.75.

Naivete, and an ample corner of the mind that is unjaded, gentle, and free, would seem to be the precious attributes of those lucky persons who see more in a primrose by a river's brim than meets the common eye. And to such, whether their bodies be grown up or not, this little collection of bird stories will bring all those delightful emotions which are their peculiar heritage.

This is not quite the book for one absolutely uninitiated into the names and ways of birds. It will be most appreciated by those who, at some time in their lives, have already made the acquaintance of birds, even in random fashion, and whose memories will awake in a quiver of delight to some of the experiences the author records. Not that this book is in the least technical. Far from it, for Mr. Baynes, in spite of his vast fund of knowledge, never writes down condescendingly to his reader, nor demands the equipment of an ornithologist. He makes the unconscious appeal of one enthusiast for birdlore to another. Are you delighted to learn a hummingbird uses spider silk as lashings for its nest? Keen, eager observation of birds, their homes and children, has revealed to the author of these little tales about blue jays, vireos, ruffed grouse, and other species a treasure-house of interesting news.

Miscellaneous

THE INNS OF GREECE AND ROME. By W. C. FIREBAUGH. Covici. 1928.

This is not a Baedeker. It will give the dry wanderer no street and number. But as a personal guide it will take him where he wants to go and will keep him well fed and largely liquored for many a merry evening. The writer is almost as much interested in the vintages and drinking habits of the Mediterranean world as he is in the inns and hostles and he has ranged widely throughout the literature to bring to the modern world the flavor of Græco-Latin hospitality.

There is no strict system in this delightful guide book as there certainly should not be. It seems boorish to make even slight criticism. But there is occasionally just a bit of pedantic overcrowding. For a book which should appeal to the genial and the sociable there might have been just a shade less of the erudite in spots.

The illustrations by Norman Lindsay are only partially successful. They help to a certain extent with the atmosphere of the book, but they hardly seem to catch the spirit as the writer has caught it and they certainly do not deepen our desire as he does to drop in for an evening at one of the better and safer Inns of either Rome or Greece.

MUSICAL NONSENSE PRIMER. By *Elizabeth L. Gallagher*. Published by the author, 150 West 104th Street, New York.

SOCIAL PIONEERING. By *William M. Gilbert*. Methodist Book Concern. 40 cents.

A HISTORY OF PRINTING. By *John Clyde Oswald*. Appleton. $7.50.

STATISTICAL LAWS OF DEMAND AND SUPPLY. By *Henry Schultz*. University of Chicago Press. $3.

THE CORNISH MINER. By *A. K. Hamilton Jenkin*. London: Allen & Unwin.

CARICATURES OF THE "WINTER KING" OF BOHEMIA. Edited by *E. A. Beller*. Oxford University Press. $16.

THE LEGAL STATUS OF AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION. By *Edwin G. Nourse*. Macmillan.

DENTITION AS A MEASURE OF MATURITY. By *Psyche Cattell*. Harvard University Press.

SCIENTIFIC HARMONY. By *Claire de Pianelli*. Grafton Press.

OLD ENGLISH PROSODY ON INDUCTIVE LINES. By *Sir George Young*. Cambridge University Press (Macmillan).

OLD ENGLISH PORCELAIN. By *W. B. Honey*. $6.

Poetry

POEMS OF THE LONGER FLIGHT. By ROBERT UNDERWOOD JOHNSON. Published by the Author. New York: 26 East 55th Street. 1928. $2.50.

At the end of his seventy-fifth year, Mr. Johnson, having behind him a long and honorable career as an editor and a man of affairs—he served as our Ambassador to Italy—published this volume as a souvenir of his birthday. "My more elaborate constructive poems," he calls these pieces. They are arranged chronologically and prefaced by an article on "Obstacles to Poetry in America" reprinted from the *Art World* for December, 1916. There is much indisputable truth in the generalizations of the preface, though "free verse" is no longer a burning issue, and it is at least as old as Milton's "Samson Agonistes." Neither is it as important as Mr. Johnson thinks that a poet should have "good manners," the descent here is easy to superficialities that have nothing to do with real poetry. To turn to Mr. Johnson's practice, the style of his odes and apostrophes is of another era. That does not greatly matter, did the phrase still fall freshly upon the ear, did the intensity of the mood remain thrilling in the words, as it does in the poetry of other eras that remains treasurable to the mind. Frankly, while Mr. Johnson is accomplished in an elder technique, a man of obvious cultivation and dignity of spirit, his lines have not that "relish of Eternity" of which William Watson speaks. He can turn a graceful tribute, convey high-mindedness and nobility in regard to civic affairs, write at least as well as a minor laureate of England like Alfred Austin; but a minor laureate of America he must remain. The range of his inspiration in these poems is wide. He apostrophizes Greece, writes with feeling of Daniel Webster, Saint-Gaudens, Gettysburg, Goethals, the Corridors of Congress, and Embattled France, to refer to a few of the poems. But his utterance for the most part rises no higher than a measured rhetoric.

DREAM CARGOES. By *David W. Code*. New York: Dean. $1.

FIFTEEN POETS OF MODERN JAPAN. By *Glenn Hughes* and *Yozan T. Iwasaki*. University of Washington.

THE ODES OF ANACREON. Translated by *Erastus Richardson*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

COME FORWARD. By *Robert D. Abrahams*. New York: Harold Vinal.

THE HELL—GOD AND OTHER POEMS. By *Louise Morgan Sill*. New York: Harold Vinal.

Points of View

American Critics

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

In an article, "Some American Criticism," in *The Saturday Review*, June 30, Mary M. Colum finds Gorham B. Munson "peculiar" because he believes that the principles of classical art are permanently valuable, and she finds him guilty of breaking the peace (when there is no peace) because "he is doing his bit to revive the old quarrel between classicists and romanticists." In this last aim he has succeeded, so far as Mrs. Colum is concerned, since she essays a definition of romanticism and of classicism, and attacks the work of Irving Babbitt and Paul E. More, who are not our only exponents of the principles of classical art, but who suffice to show that Mr. Munson's classicism is not "peculiar," at least in the best sense of that word. The briefest way to defend Mr. Munson, however, is to remind readers of *The Saturday Review* of the admirable review of Mr. Munson's book by G. R. Elliott in the issue of June 9th.

As for Mrs. Colum's attack on Professor More, her most damaging assertion, if it were true, is that "It would be very easy to show that Mr. Paul Elmer More has far more of a tendency towards Romanticism than towards Classicism." Unfortunately this very easy explanation is wanting.

As for her attack on the "disorderly mind" of Irving Babbitt and his "amorphous book, 'Rousseau and Romanticism,'" it may be granted that Professor Babbitt manifests some difficulty in communicating his thought on so amorphous a subject, but there can be no question as to the definiteness and firmness of his ideas when they are duly pondered by a reader who is not constitutionally antipathetic. An antipathetic reader, before expressing his opinion, would be well advised to turn to an exposition of Mr. Babbitt's thought by some one to whom that thought is amply clear. Such an exposition may be found in two articles by an English critic, Philip S. Richards, entitled "Irving Babbitt: I. A New Humanism" and "Irving Babbitt: II. Religion and Romanticism" in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, April and May, 1928.

Paris. NORMAN FOERSTER.

Dooner's

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

The delectable writing by T. A. Daly, celebrating the Philadelphia House of Dooner, is precisely the sort of essay on which a reader is hardly expected to comment, unless he can point to the day when he himself was a visitor in that homely, upstanding establishment. I mean to say, it is apparently the conventional idea that when one man reminisces of a special taproom of the old times, another man is looked upon dubiously if in his innocent enthusiasm he forgets he never set foot inside of the place described. Nevertheless, enthusiasm will out! What happens, of course, is that every fellow of damp disposition has his own blithe memories of bygone bars, and on the slightest provocation will stroll in to the remembered bar of whosoever he meets, with no thought as to whether actually he ever drank there, but all aglow with private fancies of the rails he himself used to polish.

In just this spirit I found it very easy to accept Mr. Daly's companionable invitation, and entered Dooner's for the first time, supping there and cupping, these many moons after the House had vanished,—sat there listening to the lilt of Mr. Daly's tongue in his fond recollection of Doornerian features. Ah, noble House! Bernhardt, Hearn, Burnham, O'Malley, O'Sullivan, Morley, and suchlike Doonerites. I wonder if presently we may become a nation of repressed romanticists, eluding the horrible, prohibitive reality of our day in the impulse to revive the intoxicating memories of yesterday?

For surely the experience so charmingly recorded by T. A. Daly at Dooner's is known to almost every man old enough to have wet his whistle prior to the historical Amendment. Surely, it is an experience known in other cities besides Philadelphia, especially the older cities here in the East. Not in saloons, but in the gathering places of true-hearted men and gladsome convivialists. You turn to your own favorites: in New York, for example, among that large various company, you think of Brown's, and Henri's, and Cavanagh's, Janssen's, and Guffanti's (old place); and, of a slightly different order, Delmonico's, and Rector's. Feltman's, at the Island, and at Queen's Water, Mollineau's—at Wreck Lead, Jake's. Some few remain, most are gone. There weren't many so noble as Dooner's. Many there were equally hospitable, fondly unforgotten.

However, I have no intention of letting this become a review of America's meeting places. Mr. Daly has done that simply by writing a history of Dooner's. What I specially wanted to say was that you can never publish, in *The Saturday Review*, too many essays of so mellow quality as "The House of Dooner," mellow like the Shandygaff served by Mine Host Peter. Nor can you ever publish too many essays (or poems) by T. A. Daly. It is almost impossible for at least one of your subscribers ever to read him or even hear his name without thinking of the following:

"He was so patience, oh, so sweet!
Eet hurt my throat for theenk of eet.
An' all he ever ask ees when
Ees gonna come de spreeng again."

New York. LEON KELLEY.

A Protest

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

The statements in Mr. Louis Untermeyer's London Letter (*Saturday Review*, May 12)—especially those relating to the so-called Americanization of English literature—are all either silly or inaccurate. The statements relating to me are both silly and inaccurate. I have no connection with "The left-wing of modernism." I am not ardent. I am not a pamphleteer. My name is not Laura Riding (Gottschalk). I contributed poems to a magazine called the *Fugitive* which is no longer published; but this does not make me an "ex-fugitive." I have never lived in Tennessee. In other words I have written some poems and I have written some prose, and I wish Mr. Untermeyer would leave them, it, and me out of his Anglo-American quotations, for we are not negotiable.

Nor is E. E. Cummings my "*quasi*-hero": Mr. Untermeyer is making a confused reference to a book he has heard of in London, but evidently not read, "A Survey of Modernist Poetry," by Laura Riding and Robert Graves, in which the authors express a temperate preference for Cumming's straight forward bunk as against the hole-and-corner bunk of certain others. Nor is my "one complete heroine" Gertrude Stein: Mr. Untermeyer is making a confused reference to another book that he has heard of in London but evidently not read, "Contemporaries and Snobs," by Laura Riding, in which the author's most extravagant statement about Miss Stein is that she is a nice person. To call someone a nice person should not seem extravagant to a nice person.

A tip for Mr. Untermeyer: in his next London Letter let him refrain from saying that I am a Communist or that Wyndham Lewis is my one perfect darling. Let him merely announce that he has heard that I have written a book called "Anarchism Is Not Enough," and that he has been assured that in it I have not called Mr. Lewis a nice person or his bunk straightforward. And in the following London Letter, in referring to some new poems by me, let him refrain from revealing the fact that Natalia Crane is my mother.

Further, in the *Saturday Review* of May 26, Mr. Untermeyer declared that "even Robert Graves, who has written an entire volume entitled 'The Anthologies against Poetry,' grants that nothing is more personal than an anthology." Now about a year and a half ago Mr. Untermeyer heard personally from Robert Graves and myself that we were collaborating in a book called "Anthologies against Poetry" (not "The Anthologies against Poetry"). Jonathan Cape's Spring list for 1928 announces "A Pamphlet Against Anthologies" (a new title) by Laura Riding and Robert Graves. This book has not yet appeared. Mr. Untermeyer has never seen the manuscript. (When it does appear he should read it on the subject of Mr. Untermeyer.)

Mr. Untermeyer's statements are sometimes not merely silly or inaccurate.

LAURA RIDING.

London.

"Few modern historians," says the *Manchester Guardian*, of Henry W. C. Davis who died recently, "have had an output so considerable and so uniformly able. A good lecturer, a better tutor, and an enthusiast for his subject, Mr. Davis brought to the writing of history scrupulous exactness of scholarship, constructive imagination, and power of exposition. His minor writings prove it as fully as his major works."

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Why is SHOW GIRL making Whoopee* among the best-sellers?

Why is J. P. McEVOY'S Novel-Revue of Intimate Americana—The Saga of Dixie Dugan, "hottest little wench who ever threw a scanty at a t. b. m."—Playing Fast and Anita Loos With All Best Seller Records, "Throwing the Literati Into a Lather and the Book-Buyers Into a Stampede?"

SHOW GIRL was published on Friday, July 13th, and sold out instantly on publication day. Three editions followed immediately, and within ten days the acclaim of the critics and the clamor of the public necessitated a fourth printing, *larger than the first three editions combined*. Before this announcement is released, printers and binders will be rushing night and day to deliver the *fifth* edition, *greater than the previous four printings put together*. "Send us by fast messenger all the copies of *Show Girl* you can lay your hands on—write your own order," telephoned the purchasing agent of one of America's largest chains of book-stores.

Why the stampede for *Show Girl*?

Why is J. P. McEVOY'S new novel stirring The Main Stem to such whoopee?*

> *"How do I know but you're knock-kneed?" asked Mr. Ziegfeld.*
> *"Well," I says, "I could bring a letter from my mother. . . .*
> *"P. S.—I got the job."*

Why is *Show Girl* evoking "raves" from *Variety* on Mazda Lane, discerning commendation from *The New Republic*, raptures from all—*yes, literally all*—the metropolitan critics, and unrestrained plaudits from the hinterland? Newport and Times Square . . . Hollywood and Beacon Hill . . . The Maryland Free State and The Loop . . . Southampton and Long Beach . . . all are hailing *Show Girl* as the most uproarious entertainment since gentlemen began preferring blondes and ALFRED ALOYSIUS HORN sold MRS. ETHELREDA LEWIS a gridiron she didn't need.

> REPORTER: *Can we take a picture of you?*
> MRS. DUGAN: *No!*
> REPORTER (TO PHOTOGRAPHER): *All right, Mike!*

Why?

Whenever such a phenomenon as *Show Girl* bursts upon the national consciousness, the reason for its success is almost always a complex of factors.

The easiest explanation lies in the extraordinary pattern of the book itself—a design unique in modern literature. "*Show Girl* is irresistible," says MORRIS MARKEY, of *New Yorker* fame, in *Books*, the literary review of *The Herald Tribune*. "It is feverishly merry. The tale is told with the pace and the diffusion of one of MR. MCEVOY'S own revues. It proceeds through the medium of letters, telegrams, cables, dialogue-sketches, extracts from newspapers, telephone conversations. The thing carries itself forward with a breathless momentum. Nobody will want to put the book down once it is begun, for the tune and cadence change so swiftly that boredom never gets a chance. And the tonic note is wisecrack, wisecrack, wisecrack in a rich welling up of smartness that somehow manages to keep its tang all the way."

> SALES MANAGER AL EVANS: *Boys, now I've got a surprise for you. TEDDY ZEST, the poet of good cheer, is going to speak to us.*
> VOICE: *That's no surprise. I read it in the paper this morning.*
> AL: *My mistake, I didn't think you could read.*

But sheer novelty of form doesn't impel critics and columnists—the brigadiers of the hard-boiled legions of Broadway—to "strip to the waist" . . . [we quote from EDWARD HOPE'S tribute to *Show Girl* in *The Lantern*] . . . "and tear into the typewriter so furiously that two office-boys have to stand over it, dousing it with pails of water to keep it from bursting into flames."

Nor is it simply the fact that *Show Girl* is the quintessence of Broadway . . . holding *The Daily Mirror* up to nature . . . "of the jazz age jazzy" . . . Or the fact that J. P. McEVOY, author of *The Potters*, *Americana*, and other stage successes, has provided in *Show Girl* what scores of reviewers have called "one long laugh from start to finish."

These elements all make for the total result, of course, but the real secret is a composite of outer style and inner factors: the authentic picture of an alluring personality in DIXIE DUGAN; the suspense and color of a dramatic narrative, a plot of tight construction; a sardonic and yet thoroughly juicy recital of a modern romance.

> NITA DARLING: *News, news, news. Pray for us. EPPUS and KIBBITZER are out—right on the fanny, and I don't mean* BRICE.—DIXIE

J. P. McEVOY takes America apart and makes it tick for us to the music of GEORGE GERSHWIN—the America of FLORENZ ZIEGFELD . . . the America of 439 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn . . . the America of Wall Street sugar-daddies . . . the America of *Merrie Lyttle Gifte Nooke* of South Bend, ordering $150 worth of Val and Easter cards . . . the America of a salesmen's pep convention at Atlantic City . . . the America of EPPUS AND KIBBITZER, purveyors of so-called legitimate entertainment . . . the America of first nights and little girls getting big hands . . . the America of Americana.

Giving this little SHOW GIRL *a big hand*

"A wow"—HARRY HANSEN

"Doomed to popularity"—VARIETY

"Ingeniously amusing"—HEYWOOD BROUN

"A grand show"—SAMUEL HOFFENSTEIN

"Incessantly hilarious"—WALTER WINCHELL

"Spectacular, satirical, diverting"—GALVESTON NEWS

"The Comedy Bible of the Follies"—FLORENZ ZIEGFELD

"A classic in modern slang"—PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEDGER

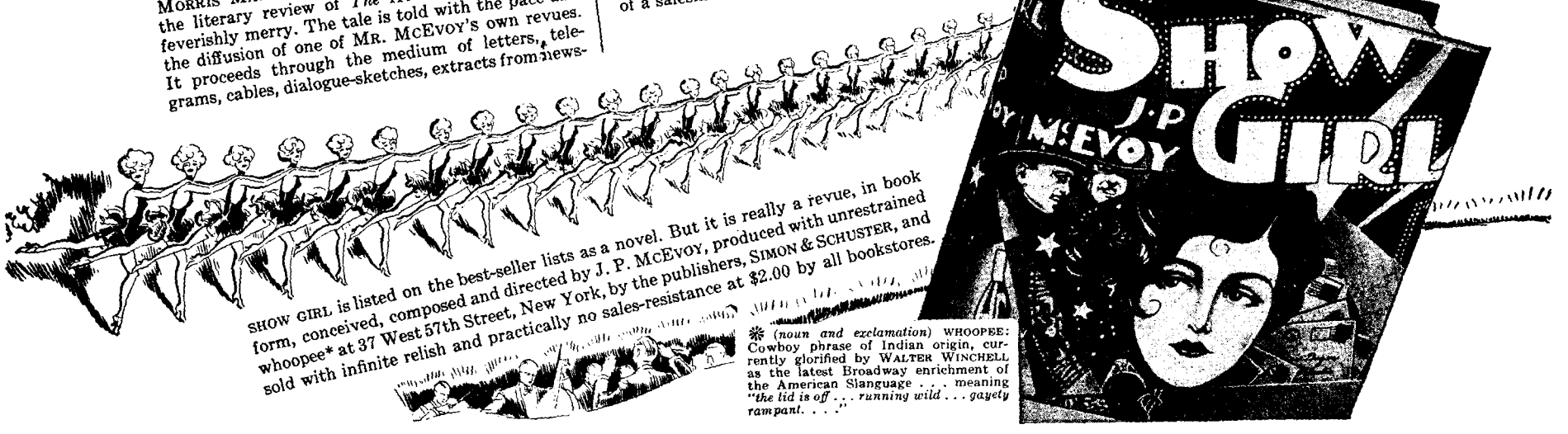
"At last, the truth about the show girls!"—DOROTHY BRYANT, CHORUS EQUITY ASSOCIATION

"SHOW GIRL *is a rowdy book. It slips away from critical comparison and saucily paddles its own canoe.*"—BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE

"If you would know the show business, and enjoy it, read SHOW GIRL."—NEWARK LEDGER

"THEODORE DREISER *wrote The American Tragedy.*
J. P. MCEVOY *wrote The American Comedy.*"
—WALTER WANGER
Gen. Mgr., Paramount-Famous-Lasky

"What an author! What a book! SIMON & SCHUSTER *are out-Gideoning the Gideons and putting a* SHOW GIRL *in every hotel room in America; and a good thing, too."*—J. P. MCEVOY



SHOW GIRL is listed on the best-seller lists as a novel. But it is really a revue, in book form, conceived, composed and directed by J. P. MCEVOY, produced with unrestrained whoopee* at 37 West 57th Street, New York, by the publishers, SIMON & SCHUSTER, and sold with infinite relish and practically no sales-resistance at $2.00 by all bookstores.

* (*noun and exclamation*) WHOOPEE: Cowboy phrase of Indian origin, currently glorified by WALTER WINCHELL as the latest Broadway enrichment of the American Slanguage . . . meaning *"the lid is off . . . running wild . . . gayety rampant. . . ."*

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